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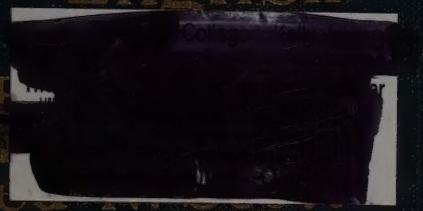

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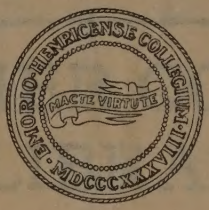

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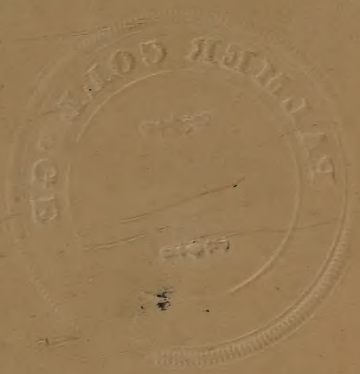

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AMERICAN TEACHERS SERIES

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THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN THE ELEMENTARY AND THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

BY

GEORGE R. CARPENTER
FRANKLIN T. BAKER
AND
FRED N. SCOTT

American Teachers Series

The Teaching of English in the Elementary and the Secondary School

BY

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Preface

In our opinion, the teaching of English is still in an imperfect state of development. Its aim, its scope, its subject-matter, its method are still to be clearly defined and determined. The earnest discussion of the teaching of English within the last quarter-century has, however, made it necessary to have a succinct statement of the issues in question and a careful summary of the most sound opinions regarding them. Such a statement and such a summary we have tried to present, for the information and guidance of the novice, and as a convenient book of reference for the experienced instructor. It is only, we believe, by sympathetic coöperation and by careful discussion and investigation that the very pressing problems relating to the instruction of our youth in their mother-tongue can be solved. We have therefore endeavored to avoid eccentric, dogmatic, and personal opinions, and to present the subject in as many of its important aspects as possible, helping the reader to see the reasonable differences of method and theory, and urging him to weigh the arguments on both sides of all doubtful questions. Throughout the book we have had in mind, not the best schools nor the worst, but rather the great majority of schools, whose excellencies and defects alike make them representative. Each writer is directly responsible for his own part of the volume, but each has so modified his work by frequent conference with the others that the opinions of one are, in general, the opinions of all.

G. R. C.
F. T. B.
F. N. S.

March, 1903.

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CHAPTER I

THE STUDY OF THE MOTHER-TONGUE

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THE aim of this book is to record and discuss theories with regard to elementary and secondary instruction in English now held by teachers and students of education. With such a purpose in view, it would at first seem unnecessary to speak at all of Latin and Greek or of French and German. Two considerations, however, must not be neglected. First, the idea that there should be any definite system of instruction in a native tongue is of comparatively recent origin and is not even yet

accepted by all; and, second, it is clear that, generally speaking, the theory of instruction in a native language or mother-tongue must be virtually the same, whether that tongue be English or French or German. It is important, therefore, that we should not regard instruction in English as an isolated problem. We must, in the first place, consider the long movement that has led to the breaking down of the theory by which all or nearly all systematic linguistic instruction should be given by means of Latin and Greek, rather than by means of a vernacular. In the second place, we must consider the systems of instruction in the vernacular now in vogue in one or more of the countries of continental Europe, with the hope of deriving some profit from foreign experience in analogous problems.

I. Latin and the Vernaculars

So accustomed are we to the conception that each modern nation or group of sister nations has its own special language, common to all or to the great majority of its inhabitants, that it is with surprise and pity that we read of imperfectly civilized Eastern lands, where different classes or castes sometimes use widely different dialects and where the written language of the learned has little or no connection with the speech of the people at large. Yet it is only a few centuries since, in each European country, at least two languages were in vogue: the vernacular, the despised speech of the lowly; and Latin, the language of literature and of learning.

Language and the People.

In the delightful series of letters on the grammar of the English language written by William Cobbett, in 1817–20, may be found the following bitter protest against the assumption, common even as late as the nineteenth century, that Latin and Greek, as distinguished from the modern tongues, are *learned* languages: —

The "Learned" Languages.

"Those languages are, by impostors and their dupes, called the *learned* languages; and those who have paid for having studied them are said to have received a *liberal* education.

These appellations are false, and, of course, they lead to false conclusions. Learning, as a noun, means knowledge, and learned means knowing, or possessed of knowledge. Learning is, then, to be acquired by conception; and it is shown in judgment, in reasoning, and in the various modes of employing it. What, then, can learning have to do with any particular tongue! Good grammar, for instance, written in Welsh, or in the language of the Chippewa savages, is more learned than bad grammar written in Greek. The learning is in the mind and not in the tongue; learning consists of ideas and not of the noise that is made by the mouth. If, for instance, the Reports drawn up by the House of Commons, and which are compositions discovering in every sentence ignorance the most profound, were written in Latin, should we call them learned? Should we say that the mere change of words from one tongue into another made that learned which was before unlearned? As well may we say that a falsehood written in English would have been a truth in Latin; and as well may we say that a certain handwriting is a learned handwriting, or that certain sorts of ink and paper are learned ink and paper, as that a language or tongue is a learned language or tongue."

Rise of the Vernaculars.

Cobbett's defence of the natural rights, so to speak, of a modern language, and his refusal to admit that any one tongue can properly be called "learned" as distinguished from another, recall vividly the long period during which Latin and Greek were conceded throughout the civilized world to be the only fit subjects of linguistic study, and Latin declared to be the only suitable medium for written and oral communication among educated men, and especially the only sure means for bequeathing thought to posterity. Of this old doctrine many vestiges remain. We still speak of the "classical" languages, with a half-conscious implication that we thereby set them apart as authoritative standards of human speech and literature; we award degrees with Latin names; commencement orators still deliver Latin addresses; the grammar of our native tongue is still frequently taught in terms more applicable to Latin and Greek than to English; and the unlettered still often feel that he who can read an ancient language must have an undisputed title to wisdom. More than all this, Latin is still

believed, by a strong party of scholars and men of influence and authority in Germany, France, England, and the United States, to be the most essential element in all sound secondary education. If we would understand, therefore, how and to what extent English should be taught in the elementary and secondary schools, it will be found necessary, first, to review briefly the long process by which English, French, and German — and in general the modern tongues of Europe — have come to supplant Latin for literary uses; second, to notice the steps by which the modern languages, from a position of complete neglect, have arisen to a position of comparative equality, in matters of education, with Latin and Greek; and, third, to discuss for a moment the extent to which, if at all, English, as a typical modern language, may properly supplant Latin and Greek in the training of the secondary schools.

(1) *Latin versus the vernaculars in literature.* For the nations that grew up in Europe on the ruins of the old Roman Empire, Latin was, during the early centuries, the official language of state and church, the only medium used in literature or in any formal written or oral communication among educated men. It was only after the lapse of centuries that the speech of the vulgar, the despised dialects of the people at large, came to aspire humbly to such uses. Even after nations had grown to consciousness of their power and dignity, Latin long remained the medium of royal edicts, and its use in diplomacy died out only towards the end of the seventeenth century. It was not until the rise of the various Protestant sects that the modern languages were regularly and widely used in public prayer and worship, and Latin is still the official tongue of the Roman Catholic Church.

Latin the Tongue of State and Church.

Literature of real value had been here and there produced in the vernaculars from the seventh century on. Our pagan ancestors, the Anglo-Saxons, wove their sombre epic in almost complete freedom from the influences of foreign culture, even as, at a somewhat later period, their Scandinavian cousins

wrought their noble eddas and sagas. But these things were done in distant corners of the earth. The career of the modern tongues in literature and their direct competition with Latin for such purposes did not begin until, yielding to an innate impulse, Provence broke forth into pleasant song, in its own rough dialect, in the twelfth century. It was followed in divers fashions by land after land, and by the middle of the fourteenth century the bonds of tradition were, throughout Europe, either broken or at least greatly loosened, so far as popular poetry was concerned.

The New Tongues in Popular Poetry.

It was in Italy, where the young humanists were alike men of learning and men of letters, that the point of issue between the old tongues and the new was first sharply raised. In his treatise *On the Vulgar Tongue*, written while he was maturing the thought of his great poem, Dante demonstrated clearly the right, and indeed the duty, of the poet to use the vernacular, proclaiming it to be the nobler form of speech, because more common, less artificial, and more closely associated with actual life. The use of Italian rather than Latin in the *Divine Comedy* was thus the somewhat daring choice of a far-seeing and clear-thinking man. But even after the success of the great epic had been thoroughly tested, Petrarch, who had himself won fame as a poet in the vernacular, thought meanly of his native language. In 1366, writing to Boccaccio, he confesses that in his youth he was led by the charm and promise of the "recently discovered" vernacular into making great efforts to improve it, but that, "turning the matter over in my mind, I concluded at length that I was building upon unstable earth and shifting sand, and should simply waste my labours and see the work of my hands levelled by the common herd." As knowledge grew, and men saw more clearly the majesty and power of the world of antiquity, scholars came to realize the orderly strength and fitness of the Latin tongue, in comparison with what was then the loose and irregular character of the modern languages. Though they were willing to waive the rights of the older language in such

Distrust of the New Tongues.

trivial matters as popular verses and tales, they were still inclined to maintain that it was safer to compose all works of learning, on whatever subject, in that tongue which all agreed in declaring the most noble, the most serviceable, the most exact, and the most durable. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that the learned Erasmus, master of the classic idioms, was not ashamed of his essential ignorance of his mother-tongue, or that Bacon was unwilling to intrust to the yet unproved virtues of English the guardianship of his philosophy, fearing that "these modern languages," as he wrote towards the close of his life, "will at one time or another play the bankrupt with books."

Though men of science may sometimes have shared Bacon's fears, however, the whole trend of literature was in the opposite direction. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there arose in Italy, France, and England groups of men who felt convinced that their native tongues were worth paying some attention to, and that, if properly developed, they would prove fitting instruments for all literary purposes. In these countries, then, scholars and men of letters devoted themselves to experiments of all kinds for increasing the range, effectiveness, flexibility, and system of the modern languages. Such efforts, at first following the ancient languages as models, were in large measure successful, and by the eighteenth century Italian, French, and English prose had each proved itself a powerful and worthy instrument for the systematic and effective transmission of thought. So far as literature, journalism, and the common necessities of expression were concerned, the vernacular had completely won the day.

The Opposite Trend.

(2) *Latin versus the vernaculars in education.* In the field of education development was of necessity much more slow. At the outset Latin was the language of all educated men, the only gate to book knowledge of any sort, be the learner rich or poor, noble or merchant or peasant. All knowledge was in Latin, and all knowledge

Latin the Medium of Education.

must, therefore, begin by Latin. Such elementary and secondary instruction as existed was given in Latin, and the function of the mediæval university was to teach, likewise in Latin, whatever was thought to be worth knowing. Only here and there was an attempt made by a commune to instruct its citizens, through the medium of its native language, in some special particular, as by the Florentine public lectureship on Dante in the fourteenth century. It was only a remote nation like England, and that only for a brief period, which could perceive that the strength of its people lay in its education in its natural tongue, as did King Alfred when he expressed his wish that "the whole body of free-born youths in the kingdom, who possess the means, may be obliged to learn as long as they have to attend to no other business, until they can read English writing perfectly."

The Old System.

Progress was almost infinitely slow. Montaigne, who was born in 1533, says of his own education, "I was above six years of age before I understood either French or Perigordian [his native dialect] any more than Arabic, and without art, book, grammar, or precept, whipping, or the experience of a tear, had by that time learned to speak as pure Latin as my master himself." Montaigne's father was a man of ideas, and had had his son trained by a somewhat original method, in that he spared him toil over books and the discipline of the rod, which was then supposed to be inseparably involved, as well it might be, with the successful teaching of Latin. But in other respects the instruction of Montaigne was not peculiar. The famous Jesuit schools, founded in the sixteenth century and long the most famous in France, the contemporary grammar (*i.e.* Latin) schools in England, and the celebrated Strasburg school of Sturm, had practically the same object in view, though their methods differed. The aim was that the pupil should learn Latin and nothing else. For that purpose it was thought essential that he should learn first to read in Latin, without previous instruction in the vernacular, and, certainly in France and Germany, that he should, even in the

lowest classes, speak Latin. Except on holidays, boys were to be severely punished if they made use of their mother-tongue, even in their games.

In the seventeenth century two great steps in advance were taken. In the first place, earnest and open-minded men began to see that the native forms of speech were unduly neglected in *elementary* instruction. In France the wise Jansenists made use of the mother-tongue in the lower classes of their famous Port-Royal schools, soon closed through the enmity of their great rivals, the Jesuits. In Germany, Ratich laid the emphasis, in his somewhat wild theory of education, on grounding the pupil first of all in his native language, and the less erratic Comenius put in practice a system by which the student, after passing the years from six to twelve in an elementary school, where he was taught his native language, passed on to the Latin school. In England little was accomplished by way of progress, but there were men who felt that English — even in Shakspere's time — was worth some slight attention. Richard Mulcaster, Spenser's teacher and the first master of Merchant Taylors, made a strong plea for elementary instruction in his native language: —

The First Step in Advance.

"Is it not a marvellous bondage to become servants to one tongue for learning's sake, the most part of our time, with loss of most time, whereas we may have the very same treasure in our own tongue with the gain of most time; our own bearing the joyful title of our liberty and freedom, the Latin tongue remembering us of our thraldom and bondage. I love Rome, but London better; I love Italy, but England more; I love the Latin, but I worship the English. . . . If we must cleave to the eldest and not to the best, we should be eating acorns and wearing old Adam's pelts. But why not all in English? I do not think that any language, be it whatsoever, is better able to utter all arguments either with more pith or greater plainness than our English tongue is."[1]

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[1] From *The First Part of the Elementarie which Entreateth Chiefly of the Right Writing of the English Tongue.* 1582. Quoted in Morley, *English Writers*, IX. 186. For Mulcaster, see also J. Parmentier, *His-*

And in 1659 we find another schoolmaster pleading for the use, in the elementary school, of various "delightful books" in the mother-tongue, for "by this means children will gain such a habit of delight in reading as to make it their chief recreation when liberty is afforded them. And their acquaintance with good books will, by God's blessing, be a means so to sweeten their (otherwise sour) natures that they may live comfortably towards themselves, and amiably converse with other persons."[1]

The Second Step.

It was not to be expected that the almost universal belief in the sufficiency of a purely "classical" education, which was held by men of authority all over Europe, and the corresponding contempt for instruction in the modern tongues, would suddenly be altered, even though it was more generally acknowledged that elementary instruction was best given in the vernacular. It was not until the nineteenth century that much real progress was made, though many influences that were eventually effective were slowly gathering force. One of these, first clearly evident in the seventeenth century, marks the second step in the onward movement, the feeling that the mother-tongue should be studied with care and beyond the point reached in elementary instruction, but not in the schools. Such a feeling was natural in the century which saw the full triumph throughout Europe of modern literature in prose and verse, and in which progress in government, science, and general civilization removed so many of the old barriers to the understanding of the world and the social organism. The modern tongues, it was discovered, were serviceable, and should therefore be made the subject of study. Discrimination and skill in the use of one's language were the mark of the courtier and the gentleman. Such qualities, however, were obviously not to be acquired in the schools, and Locke, who saw deep into the real problem of education, observed that "to speak

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toire de l'Éducation en Angleterre depuis les Origines jusqu'au Commencement du dix-neuvième Siècle. Paris, 1896. Chapter IV.

[1] Charles Hoole, master of the grammar school at Rotherham, in *The Petty-Schoole*, 1659.

and write correctly gives a grace and gains a favourable attention to what one has to say; and since it is English that an Englishman will have constant use of, that is the language he should chiefly cultivate, and wherein most care should be taken to polish and perfect his style." A further sign of the same widespread and deep-seated sentiment in favor of a training that should fit the gentleman for the duties of his station, — a sentiment heightened by the deadening and artificial instruction of the grammar or Latin schools, — was the founding in Germany, under French influence, of the *Ritterschulen*, schools for gentlemen, in which Latin was absent or wholly subordinated, and the emphasis of instruction thrown not only on manly exercises and the arts that beget grace and courage, but on the modern languages and on such knowledge as might give one power over himself and his fellows. The aim of these schools was not always a high one, but it was better than that of the instruction which they helped to displace.

The eighteenth century was rich in educational theorists, and it was largely by their inspiration and leadership that the third important step was taken, — the introduction of the vernacular into secondary education. But much too was due to the awakening sense of the people at large, who, growing alive to their duties and responsibilities as well as to their rights, found themselves sundered from the dream-world of antiquity and face to face with a new heaven and a new earth. It became clear that men who handled things should have a different training from men who dealt with words alone. The claims of science, history, and philosophy were deeply felt and fully recognized. Great ideals of human wisdom, justice, and achievement were working in all earnest hearts. The aims of "classical" instruction were transformed. Latin and Greek were no longer to give to youth mere lip-knowledge, but to train them in the discipline and aspirations of the two great nations of antiquity. The German classical gymnasia, new founded by the side of the decaying Latin schools, became noble influences in education. And, best of all, side by side

The Third Step.

with them stood the new *Real-schulen*, — schools where the realities of life had their due place. At first they were scarcely more than trade schools, or, as they have been well described, "manual training schools, in which the scientific principles underlying the various trades and business vocations should have a prominent place." Soon, however, they were given a higher scope and standing, and, when the century closed, there were, in Germany at least and to a lesser degree in France, two ways in which a worthy youth could be further trained, after his instruction in the elementary schools was over, — first, in a secondary school where the chief instrument was the ancient linguistic discipline, and second, in a secondary school no less thorough where the chief instrument was science. In both schools the mother-tongue received more attention than before, and in the second group this was especially the case.[1]

The Nineteenth Century.

The eighteenth century was thus successful in establishing in Germany, and to a less extent in other countries, the beginnings of a sound system of secondary instruction that was not exclusively devoted to the classical languages. The task of the nineteenth century was the extension and systematization of this policy. How far it has been successful in this we shall consider when we come to discuss the

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[1] "The teaching of the German language and literature has now been firmly established for over one hundred years in the higher schools of the country. Its recognition stands in direct connection with the growth of the German classical literature toward the end of the eighteenth century. Before that time the efforts of educational reformers were chiefly directed towards obtaining the removal from school and university practice of the stern rule laid down for the Strasburg Gymnasium: *Qui sermone alio utuntur quam Latino, ratione bonâ puniantur!* But in 1780–1800 two men in very different spheres were working with the same ideal of diffusing a real knowledge of the national literature. In 1788 the great Prussian Minister of Education, Von Zedlitz, built up a systematic course of instruction, and gave it a prominent place in the leaving examination; and in a school speech at Weimar, eight years later, Herder welcomed the new movement. From that time onward the subject kept its place in the gymnasium without dispute." — F. H. Dale, *The Teaching of the Mother-Tongue in Germany*, 362.

present status of secondary instruction in the mother-tongue in the principal European countries and in the United States. For general purposes it is sufficient here to note that university training has everywhere been immensely broadened; that the study of languages other than Latin and Greek, and especially the mother-tongue, has reached large proportions, and that schools fitting boys specifically for the universities have therefore been led greatly to broaden their curricula. Moreover, the strong trend of democratic sentiment and the great change in the distribution of wealth have enormously increased the number of secondary schools of various kinds whose aim is not specifically that of fitting pupils for higher institutions, as well as the attendance in such schools. And in these schools, which are naturally less under the influence of "classical" tradition, there has been a marked tendency to replace Latin and Greek in the curriculum by the modern languages and to lay special stress on the native language.

The nineteenth century as a whole, however, has been marked, in point of educational theory and practice, and, perhaps especially toward its close, by the earnest discussion and investigation of two important questions,— first, whether it would or would not be wiser to decrease greatly the use of Latin and Greek as instruments of secondary education, or indeed, as a rule, wholly to do away with them; and, second, whether, if this should prove to be the case, it would be possible to use the modern languages as a means of securing the mental discipline and the other beneficial effects that have long been thought to be best secured by training in Latin and Greek. On the first question, as might have been expected, there is still a wide difference of opinion, not only among experts in education but throughout the public at large. That question, moreover, is scarcely pertinent to our present inquiry, and has been well discussed, where it properly belongs, by Professor Bennett, in the corresponding volume of this series on the teaching of Latin and Greek in the secondary school. The second question, however,— what amount of mental discipline may be secured

Two Vital Questions.

through the study of the mother-tongue, and how serviceable it may be made for educative purposes,— it is proper and indeed necessary for us to discuss here. In order to do so we must for a moment take up the less pertinent question as to the educative value of Latin and Greek.

(3) *Latin versus the vernacular in modern education.* The many sound arguments in favour of the use of Latin and Greek, or of Latin alone, as instruments of great value in secondary instruction, may be fairly summed up as follows: —

Arguments for Latin.

1. The study of a richly inflected synthetic language is highly valuable as a mental discipline.

2. The study of Greek and Latin is valuable in that it introduces the student to the two great literatures (outside of Hebrew) of antiquity, thus training his taste and giving him æsthetic standards that are both elevated and permanent.

3. It is likewise valuable in that it gives him a knowledge of the Græco-Roman civilization, thus furnishing him the key to an understanding of the modern world.

4. Practice in translation, and especially in translation from a highly inflected synthetic language into a modern language, gives excellent training in the mother-tongue.

The principal objections to this set of arguments are the following:[1] —

Objections.

1. Mental discipline can be as easily secured, so far as can be seen, by the proper study of mathematics, the physical sciences, history, or other subjects.

2. Greek literature is beautiful and important, but present systems of instruction do not enable a pupil, at the end of his secondary studies, and rarely even at the end of his college course, to gain a knowledge of the literature at all proportionate to the time spent in acquiring it. The value of a knowledge of Latin literature is greatly overrated, and can only in the rarest cases be considered as repaying the secondary

[1] This point of view is admirably stated in Jules Lemaitre, *Opinions à répandre*, 1901, pp. 117–157.

student for the time consumed, especially when we compare the results obtained from the study of the great modern literatures.

3. For the adequate understanding of the Græco-Roman civilization a knowledge of Greek and Latin is not essential, and an understanding of modern civilization does not depend, to any marked degree, upon the study of ancient Latin and Greek society.

4. The advantages offered by translation are as easily and as effectively obtained through the modern as through the ancient languages. Men trained almost exclusively in Latin and Greek are quite as likely to write badly as to write well, and training in matters of style is best secured through the modern languages, which present us models more likely to prove serviceable, because more in accordance with the whole structure of modern life.

Each set of propositions, it must be noticed, is held by a strong party of scholars and men of letters. With regard to the merits of the general question and the relative strength of the respective arguments, I do not presume to venture an opinion. The whole question, I am convinced, is more likely to be solved by practice than by theory. Men are now being educated in large numbers, in several different countries and especially in the United States, through secondary school curricula in which Latin does not play an important part, or does not appear at all. It is by their fruits that educational systems must inevitably be judged. The end of the present century, and very possibly an earlier date, will in all probability see the solution of the question, which has in one form or another been perplexing humanity for several hundred years.

The Question to be Solved by Experience.

There is, however, a matter involved which it is important that students and teachers of English should discuss and if possible decide. It will readily be seen that the claims of the classicists resolve themselves into these four points: Latin — to take for ease of explanation the language most under discussion — is almost indis-

The Main Question for Us.

pensable as a means of instruction, because of its great value (1) as a discipline; (2) in introducing the pupil to great works of literature and in moulding his taste; (3) in giving him the necessary understanding of the social system of which he is a part; and (4) in giving him power over his native tongue. Now on all these four points the classicists are flatly contradicted by the opposing party; and on the first three heads it is with great difficulty that the classicists can hold their own. Many subjects of study discipline the mind, — indeed all subjects when well taught, and perhaps particularly mathematics and the natural sciences. Great works of literature in the modern languages are more accessible, more commonly mastered, and more generally effective in secondary study. It is to history, economics, and social science that we look for our orientation in modern civilization. But on the point of purely linguistic training the classicists still seem to preserve their ascendency. We must, therefore, discuss the important and pertinent question, — is it possible to obtain by the continuous study of English in the secondary school results as satisfactory as those obtained through the continuous study of Latin? The classicists say no; and in the great schools of England, and until very recently in the great schools of the United States, the study of English as such was almost invariably entirely lacking. What is the truth of the matter at the present time?

Recapitulation.

Let us recapitulate. We are not to consider (1) the relative merits of the classical languages and other subjects in point of discipline; nor (2) the relative merits of the classical and the modern literatures for the purpose in hand; nor (3) the relative merits of Latin and history as helps toward the understanding of the modern world. All these points lie outside our sphere. We are to consider (4) the relative merits of Latin and English as a help toward the understanding and use of the mother-tongue for secondary school students.

Those who hold that Latin is an exceedingly valuable instru-

ment for securing linguistic discipline in secondary training seem to do so for the following pre-eminent reasons: [1] —

Latin as a Linguistic Discipline.

1. The study of Latin trains the linguistic sense, because Latin is a fully developed, synthetic language, rich in regular inflected forms, and therefore able to give the pupil a clear insight into language as a system or organism.

2. The whole linguistic system of Latin is so completely different from that of English, the whole process of Latin thinking is so different from that of English thinking, that the pupil cannot, in the study of Latin, read cursorily and negligently, but must bend his mind with perseverance to his task, and learn, if at all, by close attention and the exercise of reason.

3. All translation is profitable exercise, but especially translation from Latin into English, for reasons similar to those just mentioned. The pupil cannot depend to any great extent on words common to the two languages, and is forced to master the thought expressed in the Latin, and then to decide just how that particular thought may be accurately expressed by means of a largely or completely diverse linguistic system. Many go so far as to insist that the power over his native tongue which the pupil thus acquires is far greater than that acquired by original composition in his own language, inasmuch as a secondary school pupil can scarcely be supposed to have any but crude and indefinite ideas, and is therefore best trained by an exercise in which the ideas are already supplied and only expression need be thought of.

On the other hand, it may be said with justice that: —

The Other Side.

1. It is true that English and the modern languages generally have not commonly been taught so as to give the linguistic discipline which it is well known that we obtain from the study of a synthetic language. But, though this may establish a presumption, it does not prove that an analytic language cannot be taught with similar results.

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[1] See especially Bennett and Bristol, *The Teaching of Latin and Greek*, Chapter II.

Teachers and scholars are just beginning to understand that English is not an unorganized or haphazard linguistic system, but is a highly developed and wellnigh perfect instrument for the expression of modern thought. That we are already familiar with its elements leaves us free to go the more deeply into the study of important facts and principles.

2. No systematic attempt has yet been made to use the earlier forms of the language, particularly Anglo-Saxon, as an instrument for linguistic training. Anglo-Saxon is of course not so richly inflected a tongue as Latin, but it is sufficiently different from modern English to require persevering attention and application; and a knowledge of it would be of value and interest to the student. The Scandinavian nations are making a similar use, in their gymnasia, of Old Norse, which possesses an abundant and valuable literature, and the Germans and Austrians a similar use of Middle High German,[1] and it seems possible that in due course of time Anglo-Saxon can be used in English and American secondary schools with good effect.

3. Good teachers of English composition would scarcely admit that boys of fifteen have few ideas or none. Their ideas may indeed be crude, but such terms are relative. The ideas of college boys, or even of grown men, might often be similarly described. The fact is that the mind of the high school student is usually brimming over with ideas, and the problem to which the modern teacher of composition addresses himself is not that of teaching young people to express mature ideas, but that of training them to express their youthful ideas adequately, in words just and true. The facts and experiences that form part and parcel of a boy's mental life are legitimate subjects for expression, and hence for composition; and it is, we think, being daily proved by teachers who work on this basis that training in turning these mental facts into words that adequately render them forms a discipline quite comparable in effectiveness with

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[1] For a discussion of its use in German schools, see, for example, R. Lehmann, *Der deutsche Unterricht*, 1890, pp. 115–122.

the time-honoured training of the student in turning into his own language, from an ancient language, ideas which he scarcely understands or appreciates. It must be kept in mind that the best way to treat crude or incoherent ideas is to attempt to express them to others. The crudity or incoherence then tends to become evident. This natural educative process is involved in expression by any medium, but it is especially characteristic of written or oral expression in the mother-tongue.

The Burden of Proof.

It would seem from the foregoing discussion that the burden of proof lies with the vernacular, which must in every case prove itself, by theory and in practice, fitted for use as a subject of instruction. And yet the justice of such a feeling may be doubted. If the oft imagined inhabitant of another planet should have alighted here twenty years ago in his journeyings through space, he might be supposed thus to question some interlocutor, in the course of his inquiries about education. *Question.* And I suppose that in your whole system of secondary education, — which is, I understand you to say, free and within reach of great multitudes of the people, — you throw great weight on instruction in the native language, that as many citizens as possible may gain an intelligent appreciation of its principles, its beauties, and its niceties? *Answer.* Oh, no! we give virtually no instruction in our own language in the secondary schools. In the elementary schools we teach children reading and writing and a little grammar, and whatever else they need they can pick up for themselves. In the secondary schools we try to teach them Latin, the language of a nation that flourished some two thousand years ago. *Q.* But why do that? *A.* The language has long been held in high respect. It was for some time, though not later than five or six hundred years ago, generally used by educated Europeans, and many words from it have become embodied in our own speech. *Q.* Your last remark seems pertinent, though I should suppose you would find it wiser merely to give the mass of your secondary pupils some instruction in the Latin vocabulary, in the course of their instruction in English, rather than to teach them Latin for years

and not teach them English at all after their childhood is over. That seems to me an exceedingly cumbrous method of securing a comparatively slight advantage, and much like the antique methods of medical practice which you have so recently discarded. But I can understand how you may manage to give your young citizens a fairly thorough and adequate linguistic training without insisting on formal instruction in the history and principles of the language. They would get the essence of all this, perhaps, in the frequent practice which you doubtless give them in the use of their native tongue, — in essays and compositions. *A.* Oh, that we consider unnecessary. Such training is useless. Our boys and girls of sixteen are almost fools. They have nothing to write about in their own language, and so we give them little exercises in translating passages from Latin into English or easy English sentences to put into Latin. *Q.* That is a very interesting — not to say, astonishing — condition of affairs. Still, I have seen in China other somewhat similar survivals of ancient customs. I suppose, then, that you confine your secondary teaching of English to this marvellous literature of yours, which you have been praising so highly and so justly. There you have at least a subject of instruction which must prove of the greatest value to the people at large. *A.* No, I cannot say that we make any special effort to study our own literature in the high schools. Sometimes we have the pupils read hurriedly a play or two of Shakspere, but we rely mostly on Latin literature. At the best we can, in four years, get them to read, somewhat painfully, about three hundred pages of it; but, etc.

It would be easy to prolong such an imaginary conversation, which would aim simply to take the whole subject out of its customary setting and thus help us to see it in a more rational light. The result of any such attempt to look at the matter fairly must, I think, in the present state of modern civilization, lead us to see that the burden of proof may justly be laid on the classicists, and they be asked to show how and why it is that we retain a dead language for purposes of linguistic training

and neglect our own language. The first and obvious reply of the classicists to this general argument would be one drawn from experience. Whatever theory may seem to show us, it is undoubtedly true that the apparently roundabout method has been successful. For centuries each nation has been trained in its native tongue by the study of Latin. Has a nation ever been so well trained through its own language? Such an argument, we may reply, would have been some years ago almost unanswerable, though a keen mind might always have suspected that experience, as in so many matters of science, was used to support a monstrous waste of force. Recent experience, however, counts against the classicists. It has been proved that each modern language is, to those who speak it, an excellent instrument for linguistic training. Especially is this true in certain parts of the field of instruction in English. Within twenty years methods of teaching English composition have been put in practice which lead a majority of those interested in education to believe it an exceedingly valuable linguistic discipline, and within ten years certain American schools have been securing equally important results from the teaching of English literature. Half a century more and we may be able to meet the classicists not only on the ground of pure theory, where their case is weakest, but also on the ground of national experience.

To sum up in a few words, then, the line of thought expressed in the chapter up to this point, we may say: (1) The rightful claim of Latin to be considered as the pre-eminent language of the educated classes in Europe was broken down in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and completely overthrown in the eighteenth; and, similarly, the exclusive claims of Latin to be accepted as the most valuable and one indispensable instrument of secondary instruction have been gradually weakened, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, by the increasing value set on the study of mathematics, the natural sciences, history, and the modern languages. (2) It has become more and more evident, from the educational experience of the last twenty-five

years, that much of the good effect secured through Latin as a cultural study may also be secured through the use of history and of literature in the modern languages. (3) While the rivals of Latin — and especially history and the literature of the native tongue — have been thus encroaching upon the reputation it had long held as an educational medium, it has become less and less certain that Latin could hold its reputation even in the field where it has usually been regarded as supreme, as an instrument for linguistic discipline. In particular, modern methods in English composition seem to show that this is, in proper hands, an extraordinarily effective instrument. There is a somewhat wide-spread feeling, moreover, that the study of English grammar, particularly on the historical side, and of the earlier forms of the language, may be so systematized as to yield as remarkable results as has the recently systematized study of English composition.

Three further facts which have an important bearing on the attitude towards Latin of those especially interested in the study of English are these: —

1. A still undisputed claim of Latin on the attention of the modern European nations is that it has been the source of so large a part of their respective vocabularies. The Spaniard, the Italian, and, to a somewhat less degree, the Frenchman, must know something of the Latin vocabulary in order to master their own. This does not hold true, to anything like the same extent, of German, and especially not of the Scandinavian languages, which are far more Teutonic in character. It does hold true of English, the vocabulary of which is partly Latin, partly Teutonic. To acquire the necessary hold on the Latin vocabulary, to feel the force and weight of English words on their Latin side, is not, however, a task of great magnitude. With modern methods of teaching Latin, it can certainly be secured in three years, and it is wholly possible that, under teachers trained in English philology as well as in Latin, good results could be secured in two years or even less.

Latin as a Part of English.

2. Recent statistics seem to show that, in secondary schools in the United States, the study of Latin is increasing. Not only are more pupils studying Latin, but the increase is greater than would be expected, even taking the natural increase of school attendance into consideration. As it must remain very doubtful whether many of these secondary school students of Latin continue their instruction in that subject more than two or three years, it seems clear, on the whole, that the study of Latin, as now carried on in the secondary schools of the United States, should be fostered in every possible way by those of us who are primarily interested in the study of the mother-tongue, except when the time spent in the study of Latin must be subtracted, in large part or wholly, from the time devoted to English. It must be borne in mind, moreover, that, when pursued from the point of view mentioned just above, the study of Latin is as much a part of the curriculum in English as in Latin, and in matters of method must eventually be considered primarily as an English study.

3. While teachers of English will thus feel it their duty to encourage the study of Latin to a greater or less degree in the secondary schools, they must remember that the experience of the present century, or even of the next generation or two, may well succeed in establishing the fact that English, when properly taught, has an educational value that has until recently scarcely been suspected. It is now being shown in our best schools that training in English composition may yield results hardly attainable through any other means in point of mental discipline. The progress now being made in the teaching of English literature seems to show that it now serves better than Latin and Greek the purpose of awakening and organizing the æsthetic side of the boy's nature and of building up in him a sound taste for good literature. Similarly, it remains to be seen whether the system of teaching the English language now in process of development, particularly if it be made to include the study of Latin and of Anglo-Saxon — the two great sources of

The Teaching of English still in its Infancy.

our vocabulary — has not a strong chance of supplanting Latin as the most convenient and effective instrument for education on the linguistic side. It behooves the teacher and the student of English, therefore, to pay the utmost attention to the problems presented by the teaching of the mother-tongue, treating them in a broad way, without prejudice, and with the determination to aid as much as possible in the solution of one of the most important educational questions of our generation.

II. The Teaching of the Vernaculars in Europe

English Instruction in Great Britain.

From our brief inquiry into the rise and progress of the study of the vernaculars in the secondary schools, and from our still briefer inquiry into the relative merits of the training secured through Latin and through a native language, we now pass to the consideration of the present state of the study of the native languages in the principal modern nations. As our main interest lies in English, it would be natural to turn our attention almost exclusively to England, where, one would suppose, we should find such models as we need. Unfortunately, the secondary school system of Great Britain, though in certain respects admirable, is peculiar in that it holds closely to the methods of centuries ago, so far as the relative use of the ancient and the modern languages is concerned. In all the great English schools Latin and Greek are the chief means employed to secure mental discipline and to train the taste and the judgment in literary and linguistic matters. The current policy with reference to the use of Latin and Greek in secondary education is still virtually that thus described in the report of the Educational Commission of 1864: —

"For the instruction of boys, especially when collected in a large school, it is natural that there should be some one principal branch of study, invested with a recognized and if possible a traditional importance, to which the principal weight should

be assigned, and the largest share of time and attention given. . . . The study of the classical languages and literature at present occupies this position in all the great English schools. . . . It is not without reason that the foremost place has been assigned to this study. Grammar is the logic of common speech, and there are few educated men who are not sensible of the advantages they derived as boys from the steady practice of Latin composition and translation, and from their introduction to etymology. We are equally convinced that the best materials available to Englishmen for these studies are furnished by the languages and literature of Greece and Rome. From the regular structure of their languages, from the comparative ease with which their etymology is traced and reduced to general laws, from their severe canons of taste and style, from the very fact that they are dead, and have been handed down to us directly from the periods of their highest perfection, comparatively untouched by the inevitable process of degeneration and decay, they are beyond all doubt the finest and most serviceable models we have for the study of language."[1]

The Same Subject Continued.

During the last two decades — and particularly during the last decade — there have been many signs of a movement toward placing the study of English on a more secure footing in English secondary schools. Most of them, it would appear, are now preparing pupils for the Oxford or Cambridge local examinations, for the matriculation examination of the University of London, or for other similar tests, which include English grammar, composition, and literature. The evidence seems to show, however, (1) that preparation for these examinations, so far as English goes, is still rather an incident in the work of the schools than an essential element; (2) that the schools are inclined simply to teach what the examiners are likely to ask for, instead of providing a well-proportioned group of English studies; and (3) that what the examiners require is too often not real

[1] *Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Revenues and Management of certain Colleges, Schools, and Foundations.* Vol. I. London. 1864. Reprinted in Barnard, *English Pedagogy.* Second Series.

knowledge, training, or cultivation of mind, but simply the memorizing of comparatively useless facts.[1]

On the whole, it is clear that the great English secondary schools, especially in the preparation of candidates for Oxford and Cambridge, have remained faithful to the old classical traditions.[2] Composition is usually understood as meaning

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[1] The last point is well illustrated by the following paper on *As You Like It*, set in the Oxford local examinations for Junior candidates, in July, 1900: —

1. On what occasions does Touchstone appear in this Play? Describe briefly the part he played on each occasion.

2. Give the meaning of the following words, and quote the passage in which each occurs: allottery, quintain, umber, priser, quotidian, leer, hurtling, thrasonical.

3. Describe the character of either (*a*) Jaques or (*b*) Rosalind.

4. Give an account of the plot of this play.

5. By whom and on what occasions are the following mentioned in this Play? — Robin Hood of England, Juno's swans, all the firstborn of Egypt, Gargantua's mouth, Leander.

6. Quote *either* the passage beginning "And one man in his time plays many parts" and ending "The sixth age shifts into the lean and slippered pantaloon;" *or*, the passage beginning "Hath not old custom made this life," etc., and ending "I would not change it."

See also the essay on "The Teaching of English Literature," in D. C. Tovey, *Reviews and Essays in English Literature*, Bell, 1897.

[2] All who have studied the English secondary schools seem agreed on this main point of difference between the English educational system and that of other countries. See, for example, J. J. Findlay's "Education in England," in *Beiblatt zur Anglia*, Nov. 1, 1891, p. 236. Even in the "modern" (non-classical) course, English apparently amounts to little. Indeed, the term "English" seems often to be applied to history, political economy, or any subject studied in the native language. The latest Royal Commission on Secondary Education (1895) has little to say about the matter except that "it is now generally agreed that besides that literary and humanistic course of instruction, based upon the languages of classical antiquity, which tradition has established among us, and *whose incomparable value no thoughtful man denies*, ample provision must be made for scientific teaching. . . . It is further agreed that . . . the chief tongues of Europe ought to be studied not only as instruments of linguistic training but as the keys to noble literatures." *Report of the Commissioners*, 1895, I. 284.

It is only within the last few years, and after much debate, that instruction in English, and particularly in English literature, has been

Latin composition, and such practice as is sometimes given in essay writing is cursory and incidental. The efforts of educational reformers appear to be almost exclusively directed to pressing the claims of the modern foreign languages and of the sciences, and to the attempt — so far without complete success — to obtain an organized system of elementary and secondary instruction similar to that established in all other civilized countries. Such training in their native language as English boys receive in the secondary schools is thus almost entirely confined to what may be obtained incidentally in the course of their instruction in Latin and Greek, in accordance with the theory enunciated by Thomas Arnold, who declared that "every lesson in Greek or Latin may or ought to be made a lesson in English; the translation of every sentence in Demosthenes or Tacitus is properly an exercise in extemporaneous English composition, — a problem how to express with equal brevity, clearness, and force, in our own language, the thoughts which the author has so admirably expressed in his."

The typical English schools of to-day may, therefore, be described, so far as the teaching of the English language and literature goes, as in much the same condition as were the old New England classical academies, such as Phillips Andover and Phillips Exeter, up to within a few years. At their best, they teach English through Latin, securing such knowledge and training as is necessary as a sort of by-product. The reader must be careful, however, not to infer that, because English is not explicitly taught in classical schools of this sort,

English as a By-Product.

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admitted to any recognized place in British universities. See J. C. Collins, *The Study of English Literature*, Macmillan, 1891, and "English Literature and How to Study It," *Pall Mall Gazette extra*, No. 32, Jan. 20, 1887. The absence of plan in secondary instruction in English in Great Britain can be seen in P. A. Barnett's *Teaching and Organization with special Reference to Secondary Schools*, Longmans, 1897. One of the few attempts to introduce modern methods in the teaching of English composition is L. C. Cornford's *English Composition, a Manual of Theory and Practice*, Nutt, 1900. Reviewed (unfavourably) in *The* [London] *Academy*, Nov. 24, 1900.

the pupils are necessarily deficient in the power of using their native tongue with correctness and skill. This may or may not be the case. Ability to speak a language correctly depends more upon home influences and out-of-school associations than upon school training. The habit of talking and writing sensibly, which may be secured through drill in English composition, may also be secured indirectly through any or all kinds of sound mental discipline. In the English secondary schools a far greater number of pupils come from well-to-do or educated families than in the United States. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that in many cases English boys who have not been trained in English speak and write as correctly as American or German boys who have had the advantage of a considerable amount of instruction in their native language; nor would such a state of things count against those who are in favour of making the mother-tongue one of the most important elements in secondary education.

The Native Languages in Continental Europe.

British conservatism in education, which results in her making use of Latin and Greek in education to the almost complete exclusion of English, forces us to look elsewhere, if at all, for our models in the teaching of a native language. In elementary instruction the mother-tongue is, throughout the civilized world, given special prominence and attention. It is in regard to its use in secondary education that there is a difference in national opinion. In England, as we have seen, it is virtually dispensed with. On the Continent of Europe, however, we find a different state of affairs. The favoured schools in most countries are, to be sure, the institutions in which Latin and Greek are made the most important subjects of instruction. With almost no exceptions throughout Continental Europe, public opinion and governmental regulation treat men in whose education neither Latin nor Greek has played a part as relegated to a lower sphere of life and as practically to be excluded from the "learned" professions. On the other hand, in contrast to English conditions, there is apparently no system of recognized secondary instruc-

tion in any other European state which does not possess, running from the lowest class through the highest, a definite, well-planned, and carefully graded course of instruction in the language and literature of the native tongue.

It is at first surprising to find that this is the case not only in France and Germany, but in the less conspicuous nations. The statistics given in such works, however, as Baumeister's *Handbuch der Erziehungs und Unterrichtslehre für höhere Schulen*, show that in Russia, in Hungary, in Belgium, as well as in all the Scandinavian countries, — in short, wherever there is a strong national sentiment, — liberal provision is made for the study of the mother-tongue throughout the secondary course. Such study includes thorough instruction in the grammar of the language, practical and historical, in composition in the native tongue, in the history of the national literature, and in the reading and study of a large number of selected masterpieces. Some attention to the earlier forms of the language and to the older literature is almost invariably given. Many or all of these systems will repay careful examination. For lack of space, however, we must confine ourselves to a brief summary of the course of secondary instruction in the mother-tongue now current in Germany.[1]

The General Situation in Continental Europe.

German secondary schools are divided into three main classes: the *Gymnasien* or classical schools, in which Latin and Greek are the main objects of instruction; the *Real-gymnasien*, in which Latin is required but not Greek, and which therefore answers to the ordinary classical course in the American high school; and the *Real-schulen*, in which neither Latin nor Greek is required. In the first, the time allotted to German is now, in Prussia, about three hours a week; in the second and third, slightly more, but not quite, on an average, four hours. The amount was formerly somewhat

Time given to the Study of German.

[1] Full and definite information regarding German secondary instruction in the native language may be found in the admirable books of Professor Russell and Mr. Bolton, to which the reader is referred for further details.

less in all of these, having been increased by the ministerial rescript of 1892, to effect which the present emperor, then in the early years of his reign, used his strong influence, declaring in very noble words[1] that German schools should breed German citizens and soldiers, with an understanding of the national language and a love and appreciation of the national literature.

It will be noticed that good American high schools and academies give as much time as this to English, and that some of the best give even more. The advantage which Germany has over the United States in this respect, therefore, is merely that all authorized German schools are required to allot so much time to German, and actually do so, whereas in the United States many schools lag far behind their more enlightened brothers. Three hours a week throughout the course may, then, be regarded as all that is necessary to accomplish the objects which modern education has in mind in the study of the mother-tongue in secondary schools.[2]

With regard to the qualifications of teachers German regulations are infinitely superior to our own. Teachers of any sub-

Qualifications of Teachers.

ject must have finished their gymnasium course, and have spent at least three years in university study. The average is four or five years of university study. That is to say, translating the requirements into terms applicable to American education, teachers must have spent six to seven years in undergraduate and post-graduate study. In addition, they must have passed a severe state examination, which tests (1) their understanding of philosophy, psychology, and

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[1] "Whoever has been in the gymnasium himself, and has caught a glimpse behind the scenes, knows what is lacking there. Above all the national basis is lacking. We must take the German language as the foundation for the gymnasium; we should educate national young Germans and not Greeks and Romans. We must depart entirely from the basis that existed for centuries — from the old monastic education of the Middle Ages, where the standard was Latin with a little Greek added." Quoted in Bolton, *Secondary School System in Germany*, p. 154.

[2] Provided, of course, that correct habits of expression are inculcated in all other subjects of study.

education; (2) their scholarship in the field in which they have specialized, and in which they wish to give instruction; and (3) their knowledge of some allied subject, such as English or French in the case of teachers of German. The specific requirements for teachers of German are summarized as follows by Mr. Bolton: —

"Without going into details concerning the qualifications required for teachers of the mother-tongue, it will suffice to say that no mere ability to recite grammatical or rhetorical rules, nor a simple smattering of literature is deemed sufficient. No dilettanteism is allowed. Nothing short of a thoroughly critical knowledge of the linguistic science of the language and the ability to make scholarly literary criticism will be accepted. The historical development of the language must have been studied, and also that of the languages from which it has been derived. Gothic, Old High German, and Middle High German must be easily read and understood, and some acquaintance with their literature must have been acquired." [1]

The extraordinary differences between the conditions thus indicated and those existing in the United States will be apparent when we reflect that, taking the country up and down, certainly half our high school teachers of English have not had even college instruction in that subject, much less university instruction; have no special knowledge of the history of our language and literature; and are incompetent, from any rational point of view, to give thorough instruction in their native tongue. Certainly not one-tenth of them, in spite of the rapidly increasing strictness of our city and state boards of education, have qualifications corresponding to those required by law of every teacher of German in Germany. The German requirements, like the German system, savour of pedantry, but it will be long before we can secure, in our own secondary schools, teachers so broadly educated and well informed on their special subjects.

Aims of Instruction.

The aims to be kept in view by the secondary teacher of German are thus stated in the Prussian regulations: —

[1] Bolton, *Secondary School System of Germany*, 65.

"Next to religion and history, German is the subject which is of the greatest moral importance in the organic life of our high schools. The task assigned to it is one of peculiar difficulty, and the necessary conditions for its successful accomplishment are a thorough comprehension of our language and history on the part of the teacher, an enthusiastic admiration for the treasures of our literature, and a deep sense of patriotism, whereby he may be able to instil into the sensitive hearts of our young people enthusiasm for the German language, for the German people, and for the greatness of the German intellect."[1]

Such statements have undoubtedly a naïve air, and give one the idea that the conception of German greatness thus imparted to the pupil must be both mechanical and sentimental; but at bottom the principle is sound. There is no better way of bringing young people to realize the essential elements of national life and character than through the careful, loving, and systematic study of the national language, the national literature, and the national history. What Prussia thus explicitly announces as a part of the governmental policy is, explicitly or implicitly, a part of educational policy in all the great European nations, except England. In the United States we clearly must insist on a more general and systematic adoption of the same policy.

The System of Instruction.

A further point in which we may with advantage study the treatment of the mother-tongue in Germany is that of the general interest in the organization of this branch of teaching as a system. American educational periodicals contain numerous articles on special points connected with the teaching of English, and there are several books dealing with the subject as a whole; but these articles and treatises are almost without exception the result merely of individual or local experience. Each expresses a different point of view, and has little in common with others. This is perhaps especially the case with articles on English in the secondary schools,

[1] "Curricula and Programmes of Work for Higher Schools in Prussia," in *Special Reports on Educational Subjects*, III. 271.

about which there were no signs of a common basis of agreement, in point of method or system, until the appearance of the much discussed report of the Committee of Ten in 1894. In this respect the Germans are more fortunate; they have years ago passed from the stage of aimless discussion of individual fancies and local preferences to a stage characterized by a general consensus of opinion on essential matters, and to a conviction that the teaching of the mother-tongue, from first to last, can be well planned and well executed only when all its parts are considered in their logical relations as members of a single organism.[1]

Systematic descriptions of the German course of study in the mother-tongue may be found in the article by Mr. Dale and the works by Mr. Bolton and Professor Russell. Professor Russell's chapter on this subject, in particular, should be read and pondered by every one intending to teach English in the secondary schools. The essential characteristics of the course of study are as follows: — **Course of Study.**

(1) As has been said, it is, from beginning to end, a well-planned and well-balanced system, the result of the experience of more than half a century.

(2) It is virtually the same for students preparing for the university and those preparing for professional or business life.

(3) It is not divided into "language" and "grammar" and "literature" and "rhetoric" and "composition," and other small portions. It is a course in *German*, but in it one element after another is given the attention it deserves.

(4) Grammar is taught indirectly and progressively in connection with the study of literature and not by disconnected sentences.

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[1] For German theories as to methods of teaching German, see the works mentioned in the bibliography at the head of this chapter, and the references appended to Chapter XII. of Russell's *German Higher Schools*, especially the articles in Baumeister's *Handbuch der Erziehungs- und Unterrichtslehre für höhere Schulen* and Rein's *Encyklopädisches Handbuch der Pädagogik*.

(5) Emphasis is laid, throughout the course, on oral composition, particularly in the form of paraphrase and of full answers to leading questions in recitations in all subjects.

(6) The foremost element is always literature, studied largely through carefully graded reading-books, which are prepared with a view to giving the pupil a knowledge of the best, the most suitable, and the most inspiring parts of his native literature.

(7) Correct and accurate use of language is insisted upon in all subjects.

(8) During the period of elementary and secondary education, which may be considered as closing with the seventh year of the gymnasium course, *i.e.*, *obersecunda*, a great deal of ground is thus covered, as will be indicated by the course of study outlined for *obersecunda* : —

"(a) Composition at home and in class; shorter essays on topics drawn from the general instruction; about eight essays in the school year. (b) Introduction to the *Nibelungenlied* in the original text; the courtly epic and lyric. (c) General review of styles of poetry. (d) Reading of Dramas: *Wallenstein*, *Egmont*, *Goetz*. (e) Occasional committing to memory of selections from the reading; original discourses by the students upon the contents of the more significant poems of middle-high German and of modern dramas."

Summary.

Such, in its main outlines, is the instruction in the mother-tongue in Germany. We have seen that in England similar instruction is unsatisfactory and incomplete, owing to the peculiar character of the education given in the great "public" schools and the general lack of organization in the elementary and secondary school system. In France, and in the other important European countries, the plan, aim, and system of instruction are much the same as in Germany. Having now some idea of the importance given to the subject in other lands, and of the system in vogue there, we may turn to the development of similar instruction in the United States.

III. The Teaching of English in the United States

The situation in the United States was from the first in many respects different from that in Europe. The colonists, especially those emigrating for political or religious reasons, had broken away — at least, in many points — from European traditions in matters of thought. Capable of conceiving of another order of things than that existent in politics and religion, early forced to depend on their own resources and to adapt themselves and their desires to the requirements of a new environment, they had obviously the advantage of being less influenced by systems of education which had already lost their value. It was natural that, from the eighteenth century on, there should have been a strong American party disbelieving in the old "classical" training and having ready at hand a supposedly sufficient substitute. Franklin, always so typical of the New England and the Middle States, wrote, in 1789, the following justification of a plan formulated by him in 1749:[1] —

The Weakening of Tradition.

"The origin of Latin and Greek schools among the different nations of Europe is known to have been this: That until between three and four hundred years past there were no books in any other language; all the knowledge then contained in books, *viz.*, the theology, the jurisprudence, the physic, the art military, the politics, the mathematics and mechanics. the natural and moral philosophy, the logic and rhetoric, the chemistry, the pharmacy, the architecture, and every other branch of science, being in those languages, it was, of course, necessary to learn them as the gates through which men must pass to get at that knowledge.

"The books then existing were manuscript, and these consequently so dear that only a few wealthy, inclined to learning,

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[1] *Observations Relative to the Intentions of the Original Founders of the Academy in Philadelphia.* Reprinted, with a discussion of Franklin's ideas on education, in F. C. Thorpe's *Benjamin Franklin and the University of Pennsylvania*, Bureau of Education, Circular of Information, No. 2, 1892, pp. 39 ff. The original plan is described in the same treatise, pp. 36 ff.

could afford to purchase them. The common people were not even at the pains of learning to read, because, after taking that pains, they would have nothing to read that they could understand without learning the ancient languages, nor then, without money to purchase the manuscripts; and so few were the learned readers sixty years after the invention of printing that it appears by letters still extant between the printers in 1499 that they could not throughout Europe find purchasers for more than three hundred copies of any ancient authors. But printing beginning now to make books cheap, the readers increased so much as to make it worth while to write and print books in the vulgar tongue. At first these were chiefly books of devotion and little histories. Gradually several branches of science began to appear in the common languages, and at this day the whole body of science, consisting not only of translations from all the valuable ancients, but of all the new modern discoveries, is to be met with in those languages, so that learning the ancient for the purpose of acquiring knowledge is become absolutely unnecessary.

"But there is in mankind an unaccountable prejudice in favour of ancient customs and habitudes, which inclines to a continuance of them after the circumstances which formerly made them useful cease to exist. A multitude of instances might be given, but it may suffice to mention one. Hats were once thought a useful part of dress; they kept the head warm and screened it from the violent impression of the sun's rays, and from the rain, snow, hail, etc., though, by the way, this was not the more ancient opinion or practice. From among all the remains of antiquity, the bustoes, statues, basso-relievos, medals, etc., which are infinite, there is no representation of the human figure with a hat or cap on, nor any covering for the head, unless it be the head of a soldier, who has a helmet; but that is evidently not a part of dress for health but as a protection from the strokes of a weapon.

"At what time hats were first introduced we know not, but in the last century they were universally worn throughout Europe. Gradually, however, as the wearing of wigs and hair nicely dressed prevailed, the putting on of hats was disused by genteel people, lest the curious arrangements of the curls and powdering should be disordered, and umbrellas began to supply their place; yet still our considering the hat as a part of the dress continues so far to prevail that a man of fashion is not thought dressed without having one, or something like one, about him which he carries under his arm. So that there are a

multitude of the politer people in all the courts in capital cities of Europe who have never, nor their fathers before them, worn a hat otherwise than as a *chapeau bras*, though the utility of such a mode of wearing it is by no means apparent, and it is attended not only with some expense but with a degree of constant trouble. The still prevailing custom of having schools for teaching generally our children in these days the Latin and Greek languages I consider therefore in no other light than as the *chapeau bras* of modern literature."

Elementary Schools.

The early American colonists, and particularly the New England colonists, were early moved to provide for the elementary teaching of the mother-tongue. The development of the instruction in English given in American schools, from the colonial days to the present time, may be best treated under the successive heads of elementary schools, classical schools, academies, high schools and colleges. In the opinion of the New Englanders it was indispensable that the citizen should be able to read and to write. Especially must every citizen be able to read, for otherwise he would not be able to understand the civil law, as laid down in the statute books of the state and the community, nor, more important yet, would he be able to understand the law of God as revealed in the Scriptures. In 1642 and 1647 laws were passed in Massachusetts expressly stating these political and religious reasons for the study of English and establishing schools for that purpose in all townships of more than fifty households. It is a tradition that, in some isolated communities, children then used birchbark for paper and were taught in turn by the educated adults. In the eighteenth century, during the long period of political disturbance, the elementary schools languished, but they revived in the subsequent period of peace and prosperity. For two centuries the instruction, according to the old saying, consisted of the three R's, reading, writing, and arithmetic, — a fact which implies that practically two-thirds of the attention was given to the study of the native language. This study was, in many respects, unintelligent. The method of learning to read savoured of the Middle Ages. Children were taught to spell in

the most cumbrous way imaginable. There was a similar waste of time and effort in the instruction in writing. The other branches of English study were simply grammar and exercises in reading. The grammar, in accordance with the ideas of the time, was artificial in the extreme, and eventually aroused a profound reaction against any formal system of grammatical teaching. The reading was carried on in an equally artificial way, was largely elocutionary in its basis, and had nothing of the value of an approach to literature. Even under these circumstances, with methods so primitive, the fundamental objects were roughly accomplished, and, throughout the United States, children of school age learned the two great hereditary secrets of civilization — the art of reading and the art of writing. It was not until late in the nineteenth century that the people as a whole awoke to the fact that the elementary school system must be greatly improved. Instruction in English, from about 1870 on, changed rapidly. At first it was the large city schools, or those in favoured communities, that were thus re-organized, but the new ideas spread quickly, and at the present time in a large part of the country, elementary instruction in English is organized and carried on in an intelligent way.

And yet it is just to say that, in spite of antique and barbarous methods, the old training in English was often extremely successful. This was partly due to the influence of the community. In an exceedingly interesting and important essay on *Early Common Schools of New England*,[1] Dr. A. D. Mayo says of the old New England schools and communities what was at a later period equally true of many Western schools and communities: —

The Intelligence of the Old Communities.

"The one fact apparent to every well-informed person in this period of the life of New England in general, and Massachusetts in particular, is that there was in every region of society a profound respect for education and a universal habit of rever-

[1] In *U. S. Educational Report*, 1894–895, II. 1551–1615.

ence for an educated class. In every little town, however backward, there were children and youth whose proficiency in the common school and love for study made them conspicuous, 'the town talk.' The deep interest with which the progress of such a boy or girl was watched, and the great efforts of parents, friends, often strangers, to aid any capable and aspiring student in 'getting an education,' were a beautiful feature of the town life. The clergy were especially noted for this patriotic spirit. They were generally members of the school committees and often watched the schools with sleepless vigilance. Their sons and daughters were often the teachers, and every country minister of any pretension to scholarship drew about him a group of bright young people for mental improvement, often 'fitting for college' those who were unable to pay the expense of attendance on a classical seminary. The district school shared with the church the constant interest of the people in all save exceptional towns. In the dearth of popular amusements and an exciting outward life, its goings on were canvassed in every household, and the influence of the superior people was a powerful factor in its success.

"The college and academy were at that time a far more pronounced subject of general interest than at present. There was, in the rural districts and the villages, practically no element of population supplied from 'foreign parts,' and no organized religion opposed to the prevailing Protestant church. . . . Notwithstanding the dearth of books for general circulation and the feeble estate of journalism, there were still, in almost every town, small collections of good English literature accessible to every eager youth. It was a fixed habit of the men to meet at the village store, the shoemaker's, blacksmith's, and carpenter's shops, the various mills, especially the gristmill and sawmill, to hear the weekly 'paper' read, and to thoroughly discuss its contents, and this kept alive an intense interest in the discussion of all affairs of public and local interest. A New England town of one thousand people, seventy-five years ago, with a village at the centre of half a hundred houses, during the long winter months shut up from travel, with all its energies turned in upon itself, was a battery of electric brains. Men, women, and the older children were in constant social communication, meeting often several times a week at church, lyceum, and visiting; kept alive by a vital interest in all things important to a good community. The one unfortunate habit of 'drink,' which was the scourge of so many of these places, had not yet undermined the personal virtue of the people to a dangerous

degree; and the old-time style of personal self-respect, of non-interference with the rights, opinions, and even prejudices of neighbours and townsmen, so favourable to the growth of practical good living, original thinking, and common sense, was a prodigious power in shaping the peculiar life of the New England town. And there can be no question that the teachers of the district schools in New England during this period were drawn from a superior grade of the population, and in many instances were more competent than at the present time."

Textbooks and Results.

It is not, then, safe to assume that the work done with such simple implements was badly done. The soil was fertile. Or, to change the figure, the boys of those days, with minds unspoiled and attention undistracted, were able to extract, from such crude books and primitive teaching, the needed intellectual nutriment, as hardy bodies gain strength from coarse and scanty fare. Men trained in the old schools were no weaklings, and it does not require research to understand that the old textbooks and the old methods, while including much that was harmful and false, contained also much that was true, stimulating, educative. The old Webster's spelling-book sprang from the profound conviction of the author that a nation of freemen must know the outward form of the words that composed their language; and the drill based on it, like mental arithmetic, cultivated quickness and acuteness of mind and accurate grasp of memory. The old grammars had a similar but a higher aim. Every boy and girl, to be worthy of his lot or hers, must understand the syntactical relations that are the logic of language; and the endless drill in parsing and analysis, often distasteful, usually resulted in giving the intelligent pupil an iron grasp upon the essentials of sentence structure. Of the old readers even more can be said. School children then read little and they read mechanically, but they frequently found in their well-thumbed textbooks the most inspiring literature of their race and their time. Abraham Lincoln, a man of few books, said of Lindley Murray's *English Reader*, that "it was the best school book ever put into the hands of an Ameri-

can youth;"[1] and there are many to bear witness of the intense enjoyment and stimulus derived both from the readers compiled (1820–1830) by John Pierpont,[2] which were the first to avail themselves of the new literature of the rising romantic school of Irving and Bryant, and of Scott, Byron, and Campbell, and from the more crude but still excellent *First School Reader* of Noah Webster, the patriotic *American Preceptor* (1794) and *Columbian Orator* (1797) of Caleb Bingham, and the widely used series of W. H. McGuffey (1850).

The colonists were not, however, without a deep respect for classical learning, and the Massachusetts laws of 1642 and 1647 provided for the establishment, in townships of a hundred or more families, of Latin or "grammar" schools on the old English model, in order that certain chosen citizens should be taught the "learned" languages as a gate to the "learned" professions; and similar schools were founded in many other places throughout the country. Like the elementary schools, the Latin schools declined during the troubled period of the eighteenth century; unlike the elementary schools, however, they fortunately never recovered their former status, being rapidly supplanted by the new and interesting institution known as the academy.

The Classical Schools.

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[1] W. H. Herndon's *Lincoln*, 37.

[2] It is impossible to avoid quoting a few noble sentences from Pierpont's preface to the first edition of the *American First Class Book*, which indicate the patriotic fervour which pervades the book: "Our country both physically and morally has a character of its own. Should not something of that character be learned by its children while at school? Its mountains and prairies and lakes and rivers and cataracts; its shores and hill-tops that were early made sacred by dangers and sacrifices and deaths of the devout and the daring; it does seem as if these were worthy of being held up as objects of interest to the young eyes that from year to year are opening upon them, and worthy of being linked with all their sacred associations to the young affections, which sooner or later must be bound to them, or they must cease to be what they now are, — the inheritance and abode of a free people!" Quoted in R. R. Reeder's *Historical Development of School Readers and Method in Teaching Reading*, which gives the latest and best account of the whole subject.

The policy of establishing endowed schools, attendance at which should not be confined to residents in a given community, and in which the young men of the country at large could be thoroughly educated, whether they intended to go to college or not, seemed to spring up almost spontaneously in several of the northern colonies, and particularly in Massachusetts. The main idea was derived from the similarly named institutions established in England, from the latter part of the seventeenth century on, by the dissenting bodies, whose children were not then admitted to the Latin schools or the universities. In America, as in England, academies were intended partly to take the place of the local Latin schools. There was, however, another element in their constitution which was particularly appropriate in a new country, namely, the conception that they might furnish an appropriate general education for boys not entering the learned professions. This idea was best developed by the fertile mind of Benjamin Franklin, who, in 1749, proposed the founding in Philadelphia of an academy which was to give a sensible, practical education to young men intended for a commercial life.[1] Latin, he held, was unnecessary for such students, and a thorough mastery of their native language was necessary for them, — a proposition which has gained steadily in favour from that time to this, and been applied to an increasingly large class of students.

The Academies.

In so far as they represented the Latin school, the academies paid almost no attention whatever to English instruction.[2] Out-

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[1] See above, p. 37. Franklin's plan was taken up at once by his fellow-citizens, and the Philadelphia Academy became, in course of time, the University of Pennsylvania, but not until the original idea had been radically altered.

[2] The early records of Phillips Academy (Andover), for instance, which have been recently examined for this purpose, show that only English grammar was taught there in 1820. The first catalogue, that of 1840, mentions only "written translations." In 1874 there was one exercise a week in elocution, composition, or written translation; in 1878, two terms (and in 1879 three terms) of English grammar and analysis. In 1880–1881 a few exercises in the study of English authors were given;

side the curriculum there were frequently debating societies and literary clubs; inside the curriculum there was little or nothing that bore on the study of the native tongue, except the practice of translation from the ancient languages into English. It is fair to say that, even under these circumstances, a good English education was often obtained. The interest of the community in literature, in the days of the Puritan renaissance, was such that the eager boy could be trusted voluntarily to study the great works of his own literature, and class-room instruction in Latin and Greek was carried on so carefully that the student was usually forced to translate Latin into thoroughly good English. The result of both influences was that outside the class-room he acquired some knowledge of literature and that inside the class room he often obtained a meagre but sufficient training in accurate writing.

English in the Academies.

In so far as the academy was a school for the people, it showed a marked tendency to do away with the classical languages and to substitute mathematics, the sciences, the modern languages and English. English lagged somewhat behind the other subjects. The trouble lay not so much in the lack of desire for instruction as in the general feeling that there was no great body of instruction to give. After the pupils had mastered grammar, they wrote formal themes, they gave orations and declamations, they studied treatises on rhetoric and æsthetics like those of Blair, Kames, and Campbell, or their American imitators. But this meagre and formal course of study, ill-organized, artificial, and unintelligent, was all that the academies could offer, and it is due less to such instruction than to the earnestness and vigour of American communities that secondary students gained a mastery over the English language and English literature further than that given by the district school.[1]

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in 1885, reading for the college requirements. In 1892, a group of English studies was introduced, running through the entire course. These data apply to classical students only.

[1] R. G. Boone, in his *History of Education in Indiana*, Appleton, 1892, p. 51, speaking of the education given in the Western "seminaries"

The High Schools.

In the wonderful period of the New England transcendental movement, the days of a great intellectual awakening throughout the people at large, there appeared the most striking educational phenomenon of the last hundred years in America, the widespread and urgent demand for local, free, well-organized secondary instruction. Beginning in Massachusetts and Connecticut, the two great sources of educational progress as long as New England retained its pre-eminence, it found its way throughout the Union and resulted in every state in the establishment of high schools. Like the academy, the high school was the representative of two institutions, — the old Latin school and the new school for the people of which Franklin had dreamed. Wherever the high school represented the Latin school, — *i. e.*, in its classical course, — the study of English scarcely entered into the curriculum; wherever it represented the school for the people — *i. e.*, in its so-called English or scientific course — English was a part of the curriculum; but only to the degree described above in connection with the academies.

Summary.

Up to about 1876, then, there was scarcely to be found, in the United States, any definite, well-organized system of secondary instruction in the mother-tongue. We were virtually in the same condition that England now is, and at least fifty years behind Germany. The Americans have always been a reading people, and there was a growing interest among scholars and laymen in the English language and in English literature. But only here and there had this penetrated into the secondary school system.

The Colleges.

Up to the nineteenth century the colleges had done practically nothing in establishing a good system of instruction in English. The desire was absent, for such a policy would have been destructive of the current educational system. In the American colleges, as in the English

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(academies) of about 1850, says: "Rhetoric, composition, debates, declamation, the dictionary were much exalted, but were after all regarded rather as the common and efficient means at hand toward a practical preparation for civic and general public duties."

universities at the present day, men gained a mastery over their mother-tongue by translation or in ways outside the curriculum, and no attempt was made to prescribe instruction in the history of the language, so far as it was known, or in the history of its literature. The only sign of the coming change was Jefferson's wish to give a prominent place to the study of Anglo-Saxon in the new University of Virginia,[1] which he had planned with a wisdom at least half a century in advance of his time. The elements that make up the modern curriculum in English, however, came one by one into existence. The first was a strong interest in declamation and oratory, perhaps best typified by the remarkable lectures given at Harvard University, in 1806–1808, by John Quincy Adams. The second, instruction in rhetoric and English composition, was by the middle of the century well established in several American colleges. The third element, English literature, and the fourth, English philology,[2] were not generally introduced, except in a meagre fashion, until about 1875. They were, however, then developed with great rapidity.

Influence of the Colleges on the Secondary Schools.

Such was the condition of English instruction in the schools and colleges up to about 1876. It was then that a remarkable movement began, which had the result of making the study of English pre-eminent in the more important colleges and putting it in a distinguished place in the secondary schools. The impulse that led to this astonishing change in secondary instruction came partly from the colleges and partly from the secondary schools themselves. In 1873–1874 Harvard instituted an entrance examination in English, committing itself to a stand in favour of grammatical and rhetorical accuracy in the use of English on the

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[1] See Herbert B. Adams, *Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia*, in Circular of Information, No. 1, U. S. Bureau of Education, 1888, p. 92.

[2] See F. A. March, *Method of Philological Study of the English Language*, 1865, and "Recollections of Language Teaching," *Publications of Modern Language Association of America*, 1893, VIII. (new series, I.).

part of students entering the college.[1] This policy was for years misunderstood by preparatory schools. An innovation, it was thought to spring from pedantry and a desire to burden the schools with new requirements. At that time the schools gave practically no instruction in English, and boys entering college were quite likely to write without grammatical or rhetorical correctness. As the years passed by, however, what the Harvard authorities desired became more clear, and fitting schools throughout the country began to prepare candidates specifically for such examinations. It was then that Yale University introduced a new branch of English study by requiring, at entrance, beginning with 1894, a knowledge of the content of certain comparatively simple works of English literature. This requirement was apparently based upon the theory that much of the formal accuracy demanded by the other system was unnecessary or unattainable, that the great desideratum was that young students should know and appreciate English literature, and that in order to do this they must have a clear idea of what certain typical books meant. As in the former case, the main requirement was usually misinterpreted on the part of the fitting schools, and it was not for several years that a study of the content of certain English masterpieces became an essential part of the preparatory school curriculum in English.

Movement in the High Schools.

The second influence, less formal but more vital, came from the high schools themselves. While the attention of the preparatory schools was riveted on the movements of the colleges, which they were of necessity bound to follow closely, the high schools, not obliged to prepare for college, were freer to develop a more ideal system of national instruction. Teachers like Dr. Samuel Thurber of Boston, — to name one of many, — realized, as did men of the same rank and importance in France and Germany, the duty

[1] See "History of the Requirement in English for Admission to Harvard College," appendix to *Twenty Years of School and College English*, Harvard University, 1896.

of the schools of the people in teaching the language of the people, and used every effort to put the study of English in the secondary schools on a firm basis. One of the clearest signs of the movement was the attention given to such matters in the journals of education. In Dr. Bacon's short-lived publication, *The Academy* (1886–92), the subject of English received more attention than any other, and from 1890 on the same may perhaps be said of every similar school journal. The movement arising in the high schools was in part antagonistic to the movement coming from the colleges. The college authorities, who were rarely well informed regarding secondary education, as distinguished from preparatory education, were inclined to insist on a somewhat rigid course of study, leading directly up to the work which they themselves desired to give in the early college years. The high school authorities, on the other hand, were scarcely concerned about what was taught in college, simply desiring to give to their tens of thousands of pupils the wisest, most thorough course possible in English literature and English composition. As a result each party misunderstood the other, and it cannot be said, indeed, that even now the two points of view are wholly compatible.

Beginnings of Organization.

The results of this widespread movement for the more careful and systematic study of English in secondary schools are exceedingly interesting. In the first place, separate colleges, seeing that their individual efforts to "raise the standard" of preparatory English were not having a sufficiently rapid effect, began to combine for the enforcement of the same entrance requirements. One of the first acts of the New England Commission of Colleges, founded in 1886, in response to an appeal from the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools, was to stimulate and organize preparatory instruction in English by agreeing on a uniform list of books[1] from which should be chosen the subjects given out for English essays at the entrance examinations in all the New

[1] Beginning with 1889. See the Reports of the Commission.

England colleges. The books were often badly selected, and the entrance requirements at the colleges concerned were often widely different in spirit or in letter, but this arrangement was a first step toward the formal organization of preparatory English, and, with all its vices, had the great virtue of serving as a definite requirement, on which all colleges belonging to the Commission were bound in general to agree, and on which other colleges throughout the country might easily agree for the sake of convenience. A second step was taken in 1893, when, at the instance of the Association of the Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland, a committee was appointed, consisting partly of college instructors and partly of preparatory school instructors, to arrange uniform entrance requirements in English for colleges in the territory indicated. The committee wisely foresaw that it could act only as a disturbing element if it did not proceed in harmony with the New England Commission of Colleges, the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools, and all existing organizations of the latter sort. The result was that the chief colleges and schools throughout the country voluntarily agreed, through their representatives in these organizations, on a new system of entrance requirements, involving, first, the older or Harvard scheme, which demanded only skill in composition and rhetorical accuracy; second, the Yale scheme, which threw the emphasis on a knowledge of elementary facts concerning English literature; and, third, a list of English classics which should serve as a basis for examination on each of the parts mentioned.[1] Although open to grave objections, this arrangement was obviously a great step in advance. The colleges, with only a few exceptions, had at last, with the help of the preparatory schools, agreed on a uniform entrance requirement.

A second group of results was that obtained wholly or largely through the efforts of the schools themselves. The National

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[1] *A Summary of the Proceedings of the Meetings of the Conference on Uniform Entrance Requirements in English*, 1894–1899.

Educational Association had long shown a marked interest in the teaching of English, and the publication, in 1894, of the Report of the National Committee of Ten on Secondary Schools gave a new basis to instruction in English. The committee dealing with English consisted partly of secondary school teachers, both from high schools and preparatory schools, and partly of college professors of English, and their task was to construct a curriculum in English that should serve the interests of general education, for the benefit of the many, and not merely that of the few who go to colleges. Their admirable report was the first attempt, in England or America, to systematize secondary instruction in English. The principal points in which it was noteworthy are as follows: (1) It made of English instruction in the secondary schools a complete organism. Through it the schools came to realize for the first time that instruction in English means, not a group of disconnected studies in grammar, rhetoric, English literature, and elocution, but one constant current, as it were, of work, running throughout the whole period of instruction. (2) The committee was convinced that secondary education in English can be properly systematized only when it is considered in direct connection with elementary instruction in the same subject. It proceeded, therefore, to lay down certain principles and plans for the teaching of English from the earliest grades of the elementary schools through the highest classes in the high schools.

Progress in Organization.

Other parts of the same inquiry have been taken up in greater detail by the Committee of Fifteen on Elementary Education (1895), whose duty it was to recommend a systematic course in English for the elementary schools, and by the Committee on College Entrance Requirements (1899), whose aim was to formulate a course of study leading towards the college requirements. These three reports have had two marked results: (1) they have aroused great interest throughout the country in the subject of a graded course of English instruction, and (2) they have helped to formulate definite principles on which instruction in English may be based. The ideals pursued are still

various, but the confusion is less great than before, and it is plain that light is breaking through the darkness. It will not be many years before the whole subject can be taken up from a broader and more philosophic point of view, the different theories harmonized, the different aims unified, and an ideal course of study, thoroughly adapted to American needs, built up throughout the country.

Present Status of Instruction in English.

It will be noticed that in the United States as much time is given to instruction in the mother-tongue as in the other countries,[1] and that, roughly speaking, the field covered is as great. It may, on the whole, be believed that in the best American schools the field is covered also as thoroughly. In short, the great difference between the situation in America and that in other countries lies not in the fact that the best schools in America do not do such good work in the mother-tongue as that done in other countries, but that in America there is in this, as in other subjects, a wide difference between the instruction given in the best schools and that given in other schools.

IV. The General Theory of Instruction in the Mother-Tongue

The Purpose of this Book.

It will be clear that the time has now come for a careful study, in America and England, of all that pertains to elementary and secondary instruction in English. In the first place, the subject is a comparatively new one and needs further investigation. Sound systems for the teaching of any mother-tongue have only recently been developed, and England has in this respect lagged far behind its European sisters. It is necessary for our American schools to look carefully to their own needs, and to develop their own system, turning for help to the models furnished by French and German rather than by English schools. In the second place, it is plain

[1] See J. E. Russell, *German Higher Schools*, Chapter XII., and F. E. Bolton, *Secondary School System of Germany*, 264.

that the present status of instruction in English is only partly satisfactory. The influences which have been indicated above have, to some extent, brought about a superficial organization of the whole field, but the condition is at best one of confusion and uncertainty. In the third place, the subject is worthy of the most careful study on account of its value to the public and to the individual. To the general public it is important because the curricula of our public schools are now, to a large extent, either badly arranged or insufficient, so far as English is concerned. To the individual it is important because he may be enabled, by understanding the general theory of education in the mother-tongue, to counteract the influences which have been exerted upon him by an ill-balanced, incomplete, or falsely based system. The aim of this book is the statement and discussion of the whole group of theories, general and particular, regarding the teaching of English in the elementary and secondary schools. The object of the authors has been in every case to state the principal existing theories and to discuss them, with a view to determining which, in whole or in part, are more worthy of acceptance. It is their earnest desire, however, that their own conclusion in these matters be not accepted, if at all, without careful thought.

We have seen the rise of the study of the vernacular in the chief European nations; we have also seen the various steps by which the study of English has risen in America to a commanding importance. It is now necessary to supplement this historical study with a brief consideration of the general reasons why a study of the vernacular is of real importance to the community, and with an examination of the general theory of such study.

Importance of the Vernacular to a Nation.

It is obviously for the welfare of the nation that all the communities which form it should realize clearly their mutual relations. It is equally obvious that the attainment of this national consciousness must be, to a very great degree, dependent upon the thorough and general understanding of a common tongue. Nations in which the component communities speak and read no common tongue are

nations only in name, as may be seen in China, where whole provinces use languages largely unintelligible to the inhabitants of other provinces, and where the literary language of all is a tongue which requires many years for its mastery. To speak a dialect of Chinese is the birthright of every Chinese child; but to read and write the literary language takes in itself at least ten years. That is to say, the Chinese pupil at the end of ten years is not, in point of linguistic progress, beyond the American child who has just learned to read and write the characters of the English language. The common tongue, inasmuch as it is the basis of a common literature, is indispensable to the establishment of national ideals and of national systems of thought.

Importance to the Individual.

To the individual the cultivation of the vernacular is also of great importance. It is, in the first place, his instrument in all his communication with others; it is, in the second place, the instrument by which his æsthetic needs are chiefly served; it is, in the third place, the means by which he arrives at intellectual consciousness. Modern psychologists teach us that a considerable part of our existence is filled with cerebral action that is not translated into words. During sleep, and indeed in many of our waking moments, the stream of consciousness flows on without verbal expression. On the other hand, it is clear that when the mind is thoroughly awake, when questions are to be decided and thought must be definite, the skilful use of language, even in the mind's relations with itself, is almost an absolute necessity. The intellectual life depends to a considerable degree upon the mastery of words, without which any connected chain of reasoning is almost wholly impossible. To the individual, therefore, the ability to utilize language as an instrument for his conscious rule over himself is his distinguishing mark as a man, the token that marks him off from the child or the savage.

Granting the need of a thorough mastery of the native tongue on the part of an educated man or woman, we now pass to the

several parts of which such mastery consists. It is clear that the mastery of one's mother-tongue depends upon three cardinal points: (1) the ability of the individual to understand the thoughts of others, whether spoken or written: (2) his ability to express his own thoughts through spoken or written words; (3) his ability to gain æsthetic pleasure through his native literature. These general points we may now proceed to analyze.

In what the Mastery of Language Consists.

The individual must obviously be able to articulate clearly all English sounds (independently of their meaning) in accordance with the general national custom. In other words, the infant must learn to make the sounds which are agreed on by its elders as conventional signs for the expression of thought. Such training is largely the work of the mother and of the home, but it enters also partly into school life, and is the necessary step on which all later progress in oral composition must be based. Its broader aspect is too often neglected. The child must be able not merely to utter sounds roughly and approximately, but to pronounce them accurately and by the proper use of the vocal mechanism. The elementary teacher has few higher duties than that of inculcating, by example and precept, a clear pronunciation of English vowels and consonants. It is by such training that unpleasant dialectic peculiarities — *e. g.*, the nasal twang of the New Englander — can be destroyed.[1]

Articulation.

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[1] While, however, it is the duty of the teacher to tone down harsh and obtrusive dialectal peculiarities in the speech of his pupils, it is not his duty wholly to eliminate such peculiarities. He may safely lessen the difference between one pupil's speech and another's, but he should beware of attempting to reduce the speech of all to a dead level of uniformity. To do so would be to arrest the normal processes of language growth. The speech of no country is strictly homogeneous. Differences in climate, in language-inheritance, in character, in social conditions, in modes of thought and feeling, prevail in different geographical sections, and these differences will find expression in corresponding differences of pronunciation, of intonation, even of vocabulary and sentence-structure. The Southern child, by the time he has reached the secondary school, has acquired beyond recall the Southern *o* for *u* (before *r*), the Southern *d* for *th*, the Southern *w* for *wh*, and the other peculiarities of speech

A faulty pronunciation may of course be due, in large measure, to defective organs of speech, or to defective nervous control of

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which the Northerner is accustomed to attribute (mistakenly) to the influence of the negro dialect. The middle-Westerner at the same age has acquired the glottal catch before initial vowels and the short *a* in *past* and *glass;* the Hoosier has acquired the *aw*-sound in *dog* and *fog;* the New Englander has acquired the flattened *a* in *father*, the final *r* in *idea-r* and *Isaiah-r*, and the shortened *o* in *hot*. Even if at the age of eight or ten the pupil be transplanted to another part of the country, as from Alabama to New York, he will all his life long exhibit in his speech — at least in moments of excitement and spontaneous utterance — some traces of this early acquired pronunciation.

The retention of some part of his native dialect is not, however, to be regarded by the teacher as an unmixed evil. Why should it be? The spoken language is richer, more musical, more interesting for these differences, which for educated people diminish in no degree the intelligibility of the speech. The time will come when only the pedantic and the bookish teacher will insist that every pupil in the school shall pronounce *glass* and *past* and *whole* according to some preferred authority. Indeed, the growing liberality of editors of dictionaries seems likely soon to give warrant for any pronunciation which prevails among educated people in any given section of the United States.

To take this attitude toward the teaching of pronunciation is not, however, to throw the doors open to arbitrary or meaningless variations from the common language. It is simply to recognize the fact that the common language, at every stage of its progress, is the result of the incessant competition of sectional and individual differences in speech-habits. This competition cannot be prevented either by legislation or by instruction, and any serious and concerted attempt to prevent it by rigorous discipline in the schools is certain to result in bookishness and affectation. An insistence upon clear and accurate enunciation is quite compatible with toleration of minor differences in the position of the vocal organs of pupils from different parts of the country.

When, however, the peculiarities of speech observable in the pupils are the result of foreign influences, as, for example, where the pupils come from homes in which the parents speak only Polish, or Swedish, or Pennsylvania German, the situation is radically different, and the duty of the teacher is different. Such influences are to be regarded as abnormal and should be resisted. No doubt even these influences will have their effect in the long run, and in spite of all that can be done will mould to some extent the future pronunciation of the English language in America. But at present they are extra-national. They cannot be recognized as legitimate factors in the shaping of the common language. [F. N. S.]

these organs.[1] Such cases can often be cured under enlightened medical advice, and a great many cases that might seem at first to require medical treatment could be at least greatly relieved if elementary teachers were thoroughly well trained in the use of the voice, and had a sound knowledge of the mechanism by which the voice is produced.

Correspondingly, the individual must be able to understand the words uttered by others. That is to say, his ear must reproduce for him the utterances of the vocal organs of others. Skill in this respect is likewise almost entirely secured under home influences. It may be well, however, to call attention to the fact that many cases of stupidity among pupils, particularly with regard to their English studies, are due to peculiarities of hearing, and that the duty of the elementary teacher is always to make sure that the child really hears completely and accurately. If it does not, the causes should be investigated and the child placed, if necessary, under medical treatment.[2]

Hearing.

The points spoken of above are largely secured by the general training obtained through the ordinary experiences of life. If one never went to school at all, he would by imitation, if provided by nature with good organs of hearing and of speech, learn to give a definite meaning to the sounds uttered by others and to make them for himself. The two points which follow, however, are different in this respect, and are more especially subjects of school instruction.

The individual must learn to write a clear hand. The importance of penmanship, or of the ability to form the symbols required by convention for the expression of thought, can scarcely be exaggerated. Such knowledge is a very elementary step in education, but it is none the less of the utmost importance, and if the pupil be not well grounded in this respect, as is too frequently the case, his further instruction

Writing and Reading

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[1] S. H. Rowe, *The Physical Nature of the Child*, 1899, Chapter VI.

[2] Rowe, Chapter III.

will be constantly impeded. The individual must also be able to recognize by sight the symbols by which society has agreed to express its thought; in other words, he must learn to read. It is the duty and the pleasure of the modern teacher to see that he learns to read rapidly, without, as was the case for many centuries, wasting a considerable degree of time and effort.

The subjects just mentioned are usually associated with school instruction. They may, however, be learned at home, and frequently are learned there. When he understands these two arts, the young citizen has mastered all the essentials of education. He has in his possession the two most precious elements of civilization, which are thus handed down from one generation to another. All the rest of his English education he can, if necessary, derive of his own accord from books or from life, as many great men have been forced to do. The training of the schools can, however, simplify the process greatly and add to its richness and thoroughness. In the remaining subjects school instruction plays an increasingly important part.

Effective Speech.

The individual must have the power of effective speech. It should be remembered that language is primarily a matter of the voice and of the ear, not of the hand and of the eye. The living language is the spoken language. The written language is merely a conventional form of the spoken language. The more important aim of education in the mother-tongue must, therefore, always be the development of power over the spoken language rather than over the written language. In this instruction there are two important elements, both too frequently neglected by high schools and elementary schools. These subjects are: elocution and practice in public speaking. By elocution we mean knowledge of, and practice in, the principles of voice production. The human voice is a mechanism for uttering sounds, — a mechanism whose working is dependent upon simple mechanical laws. The child can understand the chief of these, and all students can be practised in such attitudes of the body, such habits of breathing, such uses of the muscles of the throat, as will enable them to speak with effectiveness and ease.

The second point is one in which practice rather than theory is involved. No child or man has a proper mastery over his native language who is unduly impeded by nervous fear from uttering his thoughts in the presence of others, whether they be few or many. The child can be encouraged to speak frankly and freely in the recitation room, at proper times, with quiet self-possession. The older student can be helped by having practice, at regular intervals, in the speaking of the compositions of others or of his own work, in the presence of small or large groups of his companions. The result of intelligent direction in these respects will be that, on leaving the high school, every boy and girl will have learned self-control under these circumstances, and will thus be able the more successfully to meet the necessary demands of business, professional, or social life.

The individual must also have the power of effective written expression. Like the similar faculty just treated, this depends to a great extent upon the development of the powers of reason. No person, old or young, can express himself effectively by oral or written words unless his thought be worth expressing. The object of the school is partly to help each individual to be conscious of his own important ideas, and partly so to train him that when these ideas are already formed they can be properly expressed. The whole subject of effective written expression is even more largely composite than that of oral expression. In vocal expression there are mechanical laws to which the student's attention can be called and in which he can be trained. In written expression there are no mechanical laws except those involved in penmanship. Effective written expression is, therefore, mainly a matter of intellectual skill and knowledge, and may be regarded as depending upon the two subjects stated below.

Effective Written Expression.

The individual must have a clear understanding of the words which make up the national vocabulary. He must know their use and meaning; that is to say, he must realize the associations connected, in the minds of people at large, with the English

vocabulary. In order to accomplish this task thoroughly, in order to be the master and not the slave of words, he must understand, to some extent, their derivation, and this involves some knowledge of Old English and Latin; he must be familiar with their use in literature; he must realize the distinctions between different words of much the same meaning; and he must, last of all, realize the difference existing in association between dialectic or vulgar expressions, technically so called, and expressions used in literature. The process is a long one, and must continue while education and life last, but it may be well begun in the elementary schools, and the necessary foundations may be laid in the high school, so that the young man on leaving the high school may be independent, if necessary, of further formal instruction in this regard.

Knowledge of the National Vocabulary.

It is also obvious that the student should be thoroughly acquainted, not only with the vocabulary, but with the grammar of his native language, *i. e.*, with the laws that govern inflection and syntax. It is perhaps not so obvious that this part of the student's training should be extended to cover, first, the larger laws which govern the structure of sentences, paragraphs, and whole compositions, and which constitute rhetoric, and, second, the less easily defined but no less active principles which govern the general growth of the language. Little positive instruction can be given on this latter point, for grammarians and philologists are only beginning to consider it. It is becoming increasingly clear, however, not only that language is in a continual state of flux, — word after word, phrase after phrase growing antiquated or dialectic, and other locutions taking their places, — but that this process of decay and growth is to a large extent the result of a national striving towards an unconscious ideal.[1] It is for the welfare of us all that every boy and girl, so far as possible, should realize what the characteristics of our common speech are, and what its ten-

Grammar and Rhetoric.

[1] See M. Bréal, *Semantics: Studies in the Science of Meaning*, Holt, 1900, p. 7.

dencies are, for it is not by the genius, the critic, the scholar, or the man of letters alone that language is formed, but by the combined practice of all who use it.

All the preceding portions of the student's instruction may be acquired, it should be noticed, independently of the study of literature. It is not meant, of course, that they can be best secured without a study of literature, but it is only just to say that such branches of linguistic instruction depend, theoretically at least, upon the spoken language rather than the written. Under proper instruction, it is wholly possible for a student to be well grounded in drawing or painting without a knowledge of the great masterpieces of his art. He may even, to some extent, teach himself the rudiments of the art, simply by observing the physical forms which he wishes to delineate, and comparing his product with the original. He can certainly be taught with success by an instructor who uses no other model than nature itself, but who asks the pupil to observe and then to draw, and then shows him how his product differs from the original. The same process may be carried on with those portions of linguistic instruction which we know as reading, writing, grammar, and rhetoric. The following parts of the student's instruction, on the contrary, are essentially concerned with the knowledge and appreciation of the great masterpieces of his own literature.

The first of these new branches of instruction is the æsthetic appreciation of good literature. Such appreciation is not always instinctive on the part of the young, — indeed, it may be said to be very rarely instinctive. The average boy or girl, in the midst of modern civilization, finds so much outside of literature to occupy his mind, and the influence on him of the practical life surrounding him, of business, of science, of the whole world of fact, is so great as often to deaden in him even such instinctive appreciation as he may have for the apparently unreal and fantastic world of literature. The appreciation of literature is, of course, not indispensable to a useful and noble life, as has been shown by many instances. It invariably brings, however, an added joy to

Appreciation of Good Literature.

life, and is therefore, though not an indispensable part of education, at least an important one.

Besides learning to appreciate good literature, it is important that the young student should be brought into familiar contact with the great masterpieces of his native literature. Appreciation itself might perhaps be taught him through the current literature of his day, if not through the great literature of his day, rather than through the great literature of preceding epochs, just as an appreciation of painting, sculpture, or architecture might be given him through the contemporary products of those arts rather than through the greatest products of preceding ages. His appreciation of literature, however, will to a large extent be solidly based only in proportion as it is founded on the masterpieces of several periods of the native literature.

Familiarity with Masterpieces.

Last, it is important that the student should have a clear realization of the elements of his native literature that are most characteristically national or racial, in order that his individual ideals of conduct may become consonant with the more permanent and noble aims of humanity, and of the special division of humanity to which he belongs by inheritance or by education.

Influence of National Ideals in Literature.

Such is the general theory of instruction in a native language. It has been so phrased as to apply to any modern language, and may in general be said to represent the body of instruction in the mother-tongue given by all nations that are paying attention to such matters. Certain special points, however, must be mentioned in which the English language, or the English language as spoken in America, is peculiar, and which therefore tend to differentiate British or American instruction in English from that given by other important nations in their respective languages.

(1) The orthography of English, like that of French, is complicated. It is not so intricate a system as that employed by the Chinese, but it is much more intricate than that of German,

Italian, or Spanish. That is to say, the child must spend a longer time in learning the irregular and anomalous ways of spelling English words than he would in learning the more regular ways of spelling German or Italian words. In this respect, relief may, after many years, be secured, if the influence of the government and of all important educational bodies be directed toward the simplifying and regularizing of present conventions as to spelling.[1] Elementary teachers may also save the loss of valuable time on the part of the student by devising clever means for presenting the subject of spelling in such a way that its difficulties will be minimized.

English Orthography.

(2) The point mentioned above is the only point in which the English language is more difficult than other important modern languages. It is singularly free from inflectional or syntactical irregularity, and presents therefore few difficulties for the native. A child of ten may speak it with perfect correctness, so far as all points of inflection or syntax go. There are no puzzling questions of agreement, as in French, which even the well-educated native may strive in vain to make instinctive, and no intricate grammatical constructions as in German.

English not a Difficult Language.

It should also be noticed that, in American schools, instruction in English is not obliged to fight against the force of local dialects. There are in various parts of the United States certain local peculiarities in pronunciation, in vocabulary, and occasionally in syntax; but taken altogether they amount to little, and the difficulties they occasion are not for a moment comparable to the difficulties which the British rural school may encounter in teaching English to pupils whose native speech is a peculiar and dialectic form of English. These difficulties are even greater in France, Germany, and Italy, where a considerable part of the instruction in the native

Few Dialectic Differences.

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[1] See Brander Matthews, *Parts of Speech*, Scribner's, 1901, Chapters XII. and XIII.

tongue must, in isolated districts, be given to the uprooting of the native dialect and the implanting of the standard or national usage.

Children of Immigrants.

There is one other modification in the system of instruction in the native tongue which must be taken into account in the United States. Immigration has been so rapid and so long continued that the United States must in its public elementary schools educate large numbers of children to whom English is a foreign or a newly acquired language. This is especially the case in some country districts, where local conditions have occasioned the influx of a large body of foreign immigrants, and in some large city schools, where the children are often not of one but of several races and nations.

It must be borne in mind that schools are not the only means by which the young are trained in the understanding of their native language and literature. We must take into account several other factors, all of which tend to increase or to diminish the effectiveness of work done by the schools, and which therefore the teacher must keep carefully in mind, availing himself of the advantages they offer as the skilful seaman avails himself of favourable tides or currents.

Influence of the Family.

(1) Of these the influence extended by the family is the most important. A child born of educated and refined parents, who has been accustomed to hearing the language spoken correctly and with good taste, and who has been familiar from infancy with good literature, must of necessity need instruction in the native language far less than a child from a family of a wholly different kind. Indeed, it might be said that a child from an educated family would scarcely need elementary instruction in such matters at all, were it not that, particularly in the United States, and at the present time, even educated fathers and mothers often pay little or no attention to the language or reading of their children.

(2) The influence of the community is also important. As we have seen, the old-fashioned New England common school was scarcely, in itself, a medium of good instruction, but the community in which it existed was so thoroughly alive, and so thoroughly devoted to intellectual matters, that any intelligent person growing up in the midst of it could scarcely avoid having his ambition aroused and his linguistic powers trained and developed.

Influence of the Community.

(3) Religious exercises, of whatever sect, when carried on in the native language, have always been a powerful factor in linguistic instruction. The Church of England, and other churches making use of old forms of service, may influence youth deeply by the reiteration of charming groups of words, which slowly impress themselves upon the memory. Such other sects as make use only to a slight degree of set forms of worship are perhaps even more valuable in such instruction, when the attention of the young is trained by listening to eloquent or logical speakers. Indeed, far more was done for the knowledge of the native tongue in Scotland and in New England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by effective preaching than by effective teaching.

Influence of the Church.

(4) The influence of the press is sometimes scarcely less effective, and, up to recent times, it has largely been exerted for good. The more widely circulated papers of the country, until within a few years, have exhibited a high degree of dignity and thoughtfulness in all matters of expression. Of late, however, various circumstances have led to a total change of manner on the part of most of the great newspapers, and at the present day it is to be feared that the influence of the press is in this respect often a bad one. The other widely distributed forms of the periodical press, such as the monthly magazines, have a better influence, though it is to be doubted whether we are wise in allowing secondary school students to spend much time in the perusal of current literature, in which somewhat trivial fiction is predominant.

Influence of the Press.

(5) The influence of the library must not be omitted. Dur-

ing the last half of the nineteenth century one of the most notable features of education in the United States has been the growth throughout the country of local libraries, which have been widely used by the citizens at large, and particularly by the young. In this respect we differ to a marked degree from other nations, and the difference must be counted in our favour.

Influence of the Public Library.

CHAPTER II

ENGLISH IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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I. General Conditions

Present Status of English Teaching.

THE necessity of teaching the vernacular in the elementary schools is universally accepted. But in respect of the relative importance assigned to it, the material through which it should be presented, and the aim and methods determining the instruction, it has had, like other well-established subjects, to justify its place. During the last century all phases of the study of the mother-tongue have been seriously discussed. The result is a considerable, and probably a permanent, revolution in the content and methods of study. A cursory view of present conditions and an estimate of the place of English in the elementary school as determined by modern conditions will now be attempted.

In those schools which best exemplify the recent development of elementary education, no feature is more interesting or more significant than the increase in the number of things in the curriculum. A typical modern school contains many subjects unthought of in the instruction given a few decades ago. At that time the ability to read the school readers, — about six in number for the entire course ; a very rudimentary outline of the history of the United States, dealing with external, unrelated, and semi-traditional facts ; and the ability to do "sums" in arithmetic, partly as a means of mental discipline and partly as an equipment for practical business needs, made up the whole of the elementary course. If the pupil had proclivities towards hand-work, he whittled his desk or made gimcracks as a distraction from his school tasks ; if he liked to draw, he caricatured his teacher and ran the risk of the ferule ; if he had interests in natural history, these interests came into the school-room in the shape of animals illegally introduced. What are now recognized as interests and capacities to be developed, were then likely to be regarded as outcroppings of original sin. We have changed all that. We want the boy to read a considerable amount of good literature, and to appreciate it. We want him to write with a fair degree of ease and accuracy, and to enjoy writing. We want him to know the history of his country, its constitutional growth, something of the historical causes at work in the past and in the present, and something of the types of social ideas and civilization that have preceded our own. We want him to do a little drawing, painting, and modelling, and to gain some real appreciation of art. We want him to establish a good co-ordination between hand and brain, and so we give him the tools of the artist and the artisan, and require him to handle them better than his fathers. We want him to get mathematical concepts, and so to his arithmetic we add algebra and geometry. We want him to know something of the laws of animate and inanimate nature, and we give him physics and biology. We want him, sometimes, to lay the

Fulness of the Modern Curriculum.

foundations of a cosmopolitan culture, and we give him French or German. We want him to have something of the physical perfection of the Greek youth, and we give him gymnastics and field-sports. Most of these things we ask of him before he is fifteen.[1]

The remarkable thing is to see how much of all this we are getting without injury and with much of benefit and happiness to the pupil. There are, of course, many lamentable failures, — failures chargeable to dulness of the pupils; to inexpertness, ignorance, or lack of personal power in the teacher; to bad conditions in home and school, for which the community at large is responsible; to programs over-crowded, ill-co-ordinated or ill-adjusted to the needs of the school. Failures due to any or to all of these causes do undoubtedly still occur. So long as human wisdom and skill remain imperfect, so long as failure and success are relative terms and ideal results are understood to mean results not usually attained, so long will failure sometimes attend the best efforts. But none the less, though comparisons between past and present are rendered difficult and uncertain by incomplete data, it seems safe to say that the old studies are pursued as well or better than before, and these new things added thereunto. Many more things are learned in the modern school. They are learned with much less of labour and pain and tears. The dull boy and the idle probably leave the grammar school now with a better training than did the higher type of boy a generation ago; and the capable boy who works under a good teacher is incomparably better taught than were his parents. And we have probably not yet found the limit of children's capacity to absorb and to do.

This fulness of the modern school program is not only an indication of the many-sidedness of modern life, but a proof of the closer relationship between the school and the life of the community. Indeed, one hears on all sides the avowed intention to make the elementary school, whether it give the first or the last

[1] See Paul Hanus, "Our Chaotic Education," FORUM, April, 1902.

instruction the pupils receive, a direct preparation for life in as full measure as possible. The school thus becomes not merely a reflection of the richness of modern life, but an expression of a spirit that is at once social and democratic. Another equally obvious feature of the present conditions is the disappearance of the distinctly academic view of education. It is no longer an evidence of "gentility" to know things. Art, literature, and history are not felt to be the exclusive property of the fortunately born, but rather the inheritance of all who are able to acquire them. Emerson's predicted ideal of the American scholar is reaching fulfilment in the universities, and is recognized as the true ideal in the lower schools.

This democratic ideal in elementary education is at once the cause and the explanation of one of its dominant characteristics. It has been truly said that "Spontaneity is the key-note of education in the United States. Its varied form, its uneven progress, its lack of symmetry, its practical effectiveness, are all due to the fact that it has sprung, unbidden and unforced, from the needs and aspirations of the people. Local preference and individual initiative have been ruling forces." [1] Nowhere is the unevenness due to the conditions, needs, and aspirations of the people greater or more obvious than in the elementary schools. They include the children of all grades of society; and although they represent democratic ideals, and recognize, in theory at least, no difference between the destination of the son of the day labourer and the son of the "gentleman born," although the assumption in their courses of study is that both have the same destination and like ability, yet out of this very uniformity of theory spring the greatest diversities in practice. The children of unintelligent immigrants, who hear only a foreign language at home, and who have in their homes little or none of the influences of culture belonging to their own vernacular, may be found in school side by side with the children of cultivated native-born Americans. In the large

Inequalities. Democratic ideals.

[1] Introduction to *Education in the United States*, Prof. N. M. Butler, J. B. Lyon Company, Albany, N. Y., 1900.

cities the same teacher often has to instruct children of Teutonic, Slavonic, and Latin origin. Many of them learn on the streets an English full of idioms of foreign flavour.

Sectional Variations.

Not less striking are the variations of condition due to sectional differences in life and thought. In the same city the widest divergences of condition are possible. The children are familiar with different types of life, are growing up with different family and community ideals, have widely different bases of judgment. Town and country life, too, are growing increasingly different. The favoured few see both, — the country in the summer and the town in the winter, — and thus have a fuller experience. But the children of the poor often have no conception of nature.[1]

Equipment of Teachers.

Other sectional differences due to other causes are quite as great. In many States the schools are poorly equipped and worse taught. Many teachers have not even a good high school education. Their pay is not above that of the day labourer. Their position commands no respect in the community. The work of teaching has too long been no profession, but only a stepping-stone to some more honourable and lucrative calling. Professional training, though rapidly increasing, is yet far from general, and in many communities is seldom heard of.[2]

Status of the Profession.

Although the belief that the teacher must have a sound education and special training for his work is rapidly extending, and is firmly held in most States, especially in the North and the West, there are still many teachers who are almost what might be called illiterate: ignorant of science, history, and literature they certainly are. Only in a few fortunate localities is the ideal of what constitutes a sufficient education for the teacher high enough. And when the training

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[1] See G. Stanley Hall, *Contents of Children's Minds*, New York, 1893.

[2] See also two articles on "The Case of the Public Schools," ATLANTIC MONTHLY, p. 402, G. Stanley Hall, and p. 534, F. W. Atkinson, Vol. LXXVII., March and April, 1896. See also reports of the National Commissioner of Education.

and education of the teacher are sufficient, his work is often rendered ineffective by the conditions under which it is done. He frequently works under the burden of too many hours, too large a class, too few books; in rooms ill-lighted, ill-ventilated, or resounding with the noises of the streets.

Lack of Centralized Authority.

There is no centralized authority in the United States to say what education shall be. The National Bureau of Education makes reports, issues information, gives advice, and does other wise and helpful things; but it has no power as against the principle of home rule in our schools. The nearest approach to centralization is found in some States like New York, Michigan, and California, where a central board has the power of granting certain privileges and immunities to those pupils who meet its requirements in their own schools. But those who are most familiar with the operations of these systems admit their present ineffectiveness in securing uniformity.

Whether, indeed, a high degree of uniformity is desirable is a question that may well be asked, but that cannot well be discussed here.[1] Modern education has recognized the importance of the individual; and the needs of the individual community may be just as distinctive as the needs of an individual pupil. It is obvious that the inequalities in language, in race, and in experience of life which the children bring to school with them must modify or determine the methods by which English is taught.

Foreign Idioms.

Under usual and normal conditions the teacher proceeds upon the assumption that the child enters school with a speaking knowledge of English. His work then is to extend the child's command of the spoken language, and to lead him to active familiarity with the language in its written and printed form. When such an initial assumption cannot be made, the teacher's task at once becomes wholly different. It is now the teaching of a foreign language instead of

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[1] See A. B. Hart, in SCHOOL REVIEW, I. 14 ff., for the negative side.

the vernacular. It is, moreover, often the teaching of a foreign language to children who do not all speak the same language, and who have therefore, in many points, to be taught in different groups.

Race and Community Ideas.

Difference of race implies a different heritage of ideas. What is familiar in the Teutonic home may be strange in the Italian. Another source of difference in the mental equipment of the child is the character of the region in which he is reared, and from which, quite as much as from his immediate family associations, he gets his notions of nature and of human society. The city child and the country child have different experiences; the wealthy and the poor see different things. But the literature which they are to read, and to the interpretation of which they must bring certain memories, is the same, and hence in many cases requires for its interpretation experiences familiar to some children and strange to others.

Language Teaching necessarily imperfect and incomplete.

Whether these difficulties can be adequately met is still an unanswered question. But they must be recognized and must modify the teacher's work. Only a limited amount of special work with individuals is possible. The necessity of teaching by classes requires that in general the explanation of the English idiom or the English sentiment be the same for the Slav as for the Teuton. The teacher must rely upon such illustrations and parallels as the pupils can understand, and upon repetition of the idiom or the sentiment until familiarity makes it part of the mental possession.

But no matter how skilful or how patient the teacher, there must remain much that is imperfectly apprehended. Under the most favourable conditions, in fact, any teaching of the vernacular will be only partially successful. Scientific thoroughness and accuracy are impossible in the nature of the case. Approximations, partially established habits, glimmerings of ideas, *nuances*, incongruous or distorted ideas, mark the path of the efforts of the teacher of English. Imperfect achievements are, indeed, the best that can be looked for in elementary instruction in any subject, for the infant mind is a very imper-

fect machine. Or, to speak more accurately, since the mind is an organism which approaches gradually to the normal type by processes of growth and change, and the language is a complex and subtle instrument which only the most highly trained and organized minds can use with skill, it is not to be expected that the elementary instruction in English will achieve much that can be called perfect.

II. The Place of English in the Lower Grades

The arguments for the old system, under which English — *i. e.*, reading and writing — held the chief place in the primary schools, were based partly on tradition and partly on utility and discipline. It was held (1) that reading was the most direct beginning of the child's acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge was to be found in books, and, so far as the current conception of knowledge extended, in books only; it was by knowledge of books that the intelligent man was distinguished from the unintelligent. Moreover, the school life was short, and the acquisition of book knowledge must begin as early as possible. If the knowledge of the school lay wholly in books, it was partly because the schools held a narrow, scholastic conception of knowledge, and partly because the simpler and less specialized conditions of life afforded to most children an opportunity of gaining outside the school-room instruction about the common activities and industries of society.[1]

Former Supremacy of Reading: its Causes.

(2) Books were, in an age and time when religious matters were of supreme importance, the repositories of religious tenets. After the Reformation the power to read was in Protestant countries regarded as essential to the right religious life of the community.

(3) Reading offered, moreover, a valuable form of discipline; and the disciplinary idea of education was secondary only to

[1] See John Dewey, "The Primary Education Fetich," Forum, XII., May, 1898.

the utilitarian idea. If any defence were offered of a study not seen to have practical bearing on the affairs of life, such defence was almost certain to be that it afforded discipline. Of such distinction between educational values as that given by Professor Laurie[1] between training and discipline, between the purely intellectual value and what is loosely called *cultural*, the schools took little account. It was obvious that for the child the operations of reading and writing did afford discipline. Beginning with the more minute elements, the letters and their sounds, and appreciating through analytic processes their relation to the word, and then the relation of the word to the sentence or the idea, the pupil received undoubtedly as rigid a discipline as he was capable of.

To these arguments based on an earlier point of view have since been added others that are based upon conditions less changeable.

Importance of the "Literary" Unity.

(4) The literary unity is, rather than the scientific, that which the child can best appreciate, and, therefore, that by which he receives the best training in thought. This point of view has been well expressed by Mr. Horace E. Scudder:[2] "To the child in his earliest years the most direct appeal to the imagination comes from the clear-sighted dweller in the ideal world. Not yet has experience filled him with troubled questions, with doubt, with perplexity of mind. He is prone to believe, not to disbelieve, and to him should be brought the truth-tellers; those, that is, who themselves believe, whose eyes are open to the things of faith. Deepen in his mind the familiarity with what lies beyond the visual organ. He has not yet learned to believe only what he sees. Fortify in him that power of seeing with the eye of faith, which is so soon to be assailed by hard contact with things visible and tangible. I am not pleading for an idle chase of phantoms and vagaries, but I ask, is there

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[1] *Language and Linguistic Method.*

[2] "The Educational Law of Reading and Writing," ATLANTIC MONTHLY, LXXIII. 254 ff., February, 1894.

not a body of literature — not the cheap production of indifferent writers, but the rich deposit of centuries — which, by its simplicity, its reliance upon elemental truths of the soul, its homely instincts, its free spirit of wonder and belief, appeals directly, surely, to the imagination of the child?

"Hearing at once these stories from his books, the child recognizes no change in his habit of mind other than an expansion of his powers. There has been no break in his natural development, but literature has come in to deepen one great channel of his being. Not only so, but the growth of this supreme faculty of the imagination is not at the expense of his other powers, the powers of understanding, of reasoning, and of practical sense; it is highly stimulating to the development of these powers."

(5) The material found in books is of the greatest interest to the child, — particularly story books, histories, and simple poems. In support of this argument it is cited that children, particularly those of the intelligent classes, learn to read easily and are fond of reading for the pleasure it gives. **Interest.**

The greatest problems of the school now present themselves not so much as questions of method as of curriculum. It is therefore in place to consider, in the light of present conditions, the arguments upon which the pre-eminence has so long been given to reading and writing in the early school years.

It can no longer be maintained that reading and writing are the only means of giving information in the primary grades. Nature study, the study of the simpler elements of materials and mechanic arts, — in brief, the study of *things* in the school-room, has been found capable of filling the child's mind with ideas; and very young children can learn more rapidly and with less expenditure of energy through oral instruction than by reading. **Counter Arguments: Books not the only Media.**

Still less weight can be given to the arguments based upon the exclusive property of books in knowledge. Knowledge, intelligence, even mental power may now be conceded to those whose knowledge of books is comparatively limited.

The provinces of science, art, and practical affairs all have such men to show. Nor, on the other hand, is knowledge of books, even such knowledge as an enlightened system of instruction seeks to give, sufficient to insure a liberal education in the highest sense of the term.

Doubts as to the Value of the Discipline.

The fact of discipline in reading and writing is not gainsaid. But of the value of such discipline grave doubts, based on psychological researches, have arisen. It is argued: (*a*) the child has not reached the stage of development at which fine analytic discriminations should be required of him. Attention to minutiæ of any sort is a severe tax, which results sometimes in loss of interest, sometimes in injury to the nervous system, and arrested development. Advocates of this view argue that science and the manual arts are better adapted to the child's stage of development, and more interesting.

(*b*) That discipline in and of itself is of much less efficacy than was formerly supposed. It has been demonstrated that good intellectual habits are not necessarily transferable; that a high degree of accuracy in one line of activity is often found compatible with actual slovenliness in another. In fine, that discipline is valuable in and for the field of work in which it is given, and valueless for anything outside of that field.[1] Discipline in reading and writing, then, while it would make good readers and good writers of the pupils, would do nothing else for them.

The Scientific Unity.

To the argument that the literary unity is the best kind for the child, the man of science is most likely to object. To him the strict sequence of logic, the relation of cause and effect, the grouping of conceptions into classes, has come to seem the easy and normal process of the mind. It must be admitted that children manifest an early interest in facts and their causes in logical relationships; and that literary unity is often fantastic, superficial, or arbitrary, and based on mere seemings and unrealities.

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[1] Thorndike and Woodworth, *Psychological Review*, VIII. 247–261, 384–395, and 553–564.

Children are undoubtedly interested in things that lie outside the realm of books. To the bright child books often seem dull and stupid compared with the vividness and reality of the world around him, with sports, industries, the properties of things, the wonders of nature.

Interest.

To all these arguments must be conceded a certain validity. Books are no longer the only vehicle of knowledge. The disciplinary value of learning to read and to write may be overestimated or misapplied. The literary unity is assuredly not the only method of organizing ideas that the child can appreciate. Nor is the material found in books always that of most absorbing interest to him. What then shall we accept as a present and approximate answer to the questions here raised?

(1) Although books are no longer the exclusive sources of knowledge, yet the printed page is still so much the means of recording and transmitting the majority of the world's important ideas, that the power to read is, in fact, more than ever a prime necessity in the equipment of every one for capable business activity, for intelligent citizenship, and for culture; and therefore, although reading can no longer claim the exclusive place in a scheme of primary education, the burden of proof still rests upon those who would assign to it a secondary place. It is indispensable as an instrument for further education, and no abandonment or postponement of its supremacy can be considered except upon reasonable probability of the greatest physical and mental welfare of the child.

Books still the Principal Media.

(2) Nor can the disciplinary element in the primary schools be ignored. It has long been recognized that an ill-managed Kindergarten is a foe to good work in the primary school.[1] In the same way the ill-regulated work of the primary school may breed habits of inattention and general intellectual flabbiness, to the

Need of Discipline in Language.

[1] For a somewhat extreme statement, see "The Kindergarten Child, — after the Kindergarten," by Marion H. Carter, ATLANTIC MONTHLY, LXXXIII., March, 1899.

frustration of the work in higher grades. There must be discipline, from the beginning of the school life; and the discipline in reading and writing is within a field of activity necessary for the child both in school and in after life.

(3) This discipline must be adapted to the capacities of the child. Science and the manual arts, when well taught, also furnish discipline. They cultivate the habit of observation, they lead to sound knowledge of the relations of things. They are within the range of the child's powers and interests. In so far they hold exactly the same claim to a place in the primary curriculum as do reading and writing. Judged by their results as well as by their inherent value, they have proved their right to be there. They do not, however, give all the training which children at this stage should receive. The language faculty, though more or less involved in teaching these subjects, can with difficulty, or not at all, receive through them alone the degree of development of which it is capable. The child's command of language is fixed and enriched by reading and writing; and accuracy of thought and expression are almost conditioned upon such exercise. Interest in language itself, the conscious attention to expression, is an essential of the cultivated mind; and such interest is more likely to be aroused if the beginnings of reading and writing are made early in the school life.

Science and the Manual Arts Insufficient.

(4) The literary unity seems to be the prevailing method of organization in the child's mind. The play of fancy, and even the jingle of nonsense rhymes and the fantastic tale are congenial to his taste; here words and ideas are presented in an order that he can easily follow. It is not always the order of wisdom or of logic; it is often the order of play. But play is one of the child's means of giving his faculties exercise. In the more serious literature, the stories of heroes, etc., the child finds motives that he can understand and imitate, appreciates the relation of motive to action, and so comprehends the organization, the inner unity, of the story. Moreover, the literary unity is the one to which he is first accustomed. His playmates and his parents view life and speak

The Literary Unity fitted to the Child's Mind.

of it, though crudely, in the way the maker of tales views it, and not as the scientist does.

(5) Finally, since the spontaneous interests of children undoubtedly include the things found in books as well as the things outside of books, it is advisable to seize upon this interest as early as it is available, and to turn it to account in the necessary task of learning to read and to write.

Summary.

The conclusion would then seem to be that the study of reading and writing can neither claim the lion's share of the time in the primary school, nor be put aside as a subordinate thing. Its necessity, its interest, and its adaptability to the child's stage of mental growth claim for it a place second to no other subject in the school day.

How much Time in the Later Grades?

Enthusiasts in the cause of English study have undoubtedly done it some harm by unreasonable demands in its behalf. Realizing that it needed improvement, and that more concentration was one of the essential conditions to its improvement, they have argued that it should receive throughout the entire elementary course more time than all other subjects included. Such a claim disregards the impoverishment of the school curriculum that would result from curtailing the work in science, history, and the manual arts, and ignores the opportunities of the capable teacher for training in English in all the work of the school. How much time should be given to English it is perhaps unwise to attempt to state in numerical terms. During the earlier years, until, say, the fifth year in school, perhaps a third of the total time of the school can be wisely given to it. After the fifth year, when reading and writing have become comparatively easy, the time may be safely lessened, until in the last year it includes no more than an hour a day. Less than this it should never be.

III. Primary Reading Matter

In its general use the term "education" has long included, and is still often understood to include, little more than the ability to read and write. This idea survives in the legal

meaning of the term "illiteracy": inability to read and write. To be able to read and write was to be "lettered," that is, educated. It is therefore to be expected that the history of the teaching of reading and writing would be an interesting and important chapter in the history of education. Learning to read and write has been to many children a painful process, whose difficulties have been a puzzle to thoughtful teachers and a stumbling-block to the unskilful. Quintilian thought it worth while to prescribe[1] — though with apologies for introducing a matter so elementary — the manner in which reading and writing should be begun. And so important did this early instruction seem to Plato that he dwells at length upon the kind of reading to be given to the youth of an ideal republic.[2]

Modern Theories.

Modern educational thought has brought to bear upon the subject the results of scientific experiment and common experience as well as the deductions of philosophical speculation. To the Germans more than to any one else we owe the discussion of materials and methods, the enthusiastic advocacy of new theories, the long and patient series of experiment and observation. France has had theorists who have made notable advances in method, especially the Port Royalists, Rousseau and Jacotot. England has had some clear voices, like Mulcaster and Ascham, who have wisely advocated the study of the mother-tongue. The United States has within recent years taken up the best — as well as the worst — of these various theories, and by patient and enthusiastic discussion and experiment helped to clear away much of the confusion gathered around the subject. But the fact stands, that the development of the teaching of reading and writing, from the long-established but severe and irrational plan of beginning with the names of the letters and spelling them into words, to the kindlier and wiser methods of to-day, is best presented in the history of the common schools of Germany, from the efforts

Our Indebtedness to the Germans.

[1] *De Oratore*, Book I. chapter 1.

[2] *Laws*, VII. 809–818.

of Ickelsamer, who lived in the time of the Reformation, to the practices now established in their primary schools. Within these four hundred years of German educational activity, virtually every theory of what should be read, how much, when, and how; every theory of how the beginnings of reading, writing, and spelling should be made; in brief, the whole problem of the teaching of the mother-tongue in the elementary schools, has been considered, and tested by experiment.

In contemplating this development[1] two phases of the subject appear: teachers have taken thought over what should be read and how the arts of reading and writing should be taught. The question of what to read will first be discussed, in its history and present phases.

Beginnings of Popular Education: the Reformation.

The history of the modern movement begins with the period of the Reformation. Before that time there could not be said to be any general interest in popular education. Following the Reformation came the wider spread of the ability to read and write. Book learning was less confined to clerks and monks. Skill in wielding arms and familiarity with the codes of chivalry were ceasing to be the only elements of the education of the upper classes. The invention of printing had made books more accessible. The expansion of commerce had given to education a practical value. The growth of the ideas for which Luther stood, and which implied the right and duty of every man to read the Bible, was a direct cause of the more general interest in educational methods and materials.

School Reading at first Religious.

Interest in the study of the mother-tongue, which in the eighteenth century looked to the development of its possibilities for literature, had in view in the sixteenth century especially its importance for practical and ethical ends. The first school readers after the Reformation were, as was natural, distinctly religious

[1] This topic is fully treated in the excellent work of Carl Kehr, *Geschichte des deutschen Unterrichts in der Volksschule*. See also the interesting monograph of President G. Stanley Hall, *How to Teach Reading*.

in character. Prior to the Reformation the schools had only an A B C book, or a primer, which contained the alphabet, a collection of syllables, and certain extracts of a religious nature.[1] In one of the school books of the Reformation period we find the following table of contents: a grace, and a thank offering after the meal, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. In another, by Ickelsamer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Last Supper, the Magnificat, the Benedictus, etc. Passages from the Bible, — especially the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, — the hymns of Luther, and certain other parts of the service of the church, continue to reappear as the principal reading matter of the primary schools, partly because of the serious religious temper of the German people, partly, no doubt, because there was as yet but little German literature to dispute the supremacy of distinctly religious writings in the affections of the people. The German word for primer, *Fibel*, is now understood to have meant *little bible*, and its purpose as an introduction to the Bible is evident enough. Though other types of books began to be introduced into the schools, and the religious reading-books came gradually to be diluted with other material, the Bible continued to hold the field until the eighteenth century. The controversies over its use were many and often bitter. In the middle of the nineteenth century its use as a school reading-book in Prussia was forbidden by law.

The Element of Pleasure Introduced.

The second important stage in the development of the reading-book is represented in the work of Basedow (1723–1790) and the so-called philanthropinists. Recognizing the hardship of learning to read, and the lack of interest for the child in the books to be read, Basedow compiled a primer in which the children read of things pleasant to eat and to see: of almonds, raisins, apples, etc. In his school the children played out in games

[1] Fechner, *Geschichte des Volksschul-Lesebuches.*

their learning of German and Latin, and were rewarded with sweetmeats when they answered well, — in short, had the task of learning made pure play.[1] His work called forth much local enthusiasm and much general scorn. But it did, at any rate, contribute a valuable idea to education.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century appeared the first two school reading-books, in the modern sense of the term. Eberhard von Rochow issued in 1776 a book containing so-called "moral tales," illustrating the virtues of politeness, modesty, and so on, in the place of the religious extracts of the earlier period. Rochow advised that the children should first be made acquainted with the simple sounds and the written and printed names of simple and familiar things; that they should be led to talk of these, and their oral speech be made more ready and accurate while they were learning to read. When they had learned to read words of one syllable with some readiness, they took his *Children's Friend*, and had practice in reading simple matter adapted to their tastes and capacities. By this system the emphasis was thrown first upon instruction in language, and then upon the choice of material suitable from the points of view of interest and difficulty. The book is said to have reached a circulation of one hundred thousand copies. The primer of Christian Felix Weisze, issued at Leipsic in 1772, is equally remarkable. Its title[2] indicates its character. It contained short stories, fables, songs, prayers, little verses, and an illustration with each letter of the alphabet, like the modern nursery books. It soon attained a sixth edition and a translation into French. These two books are representative of the type of school reader which was displacing the religious primer, and which by the middle of the nineteenth century came to be generally adopted. But the struggle was

The First School Readers: the "Moral Tales."

[1] For an interesting account of Basedow's work and method, see THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION, V. 487–520. Hartford, Conn., and London, 1858.

[2] *Neues ABC-Buch, nebst einigen kleinen Uebungen und Unterhaltungen für Kinder; mit* 25 *illuminierten Abbildungen auf* 13 *Tafeln.*

long and often bitter. The prejudice in favour of the old was due not only to that conservatism which resists changes as such, but to a religious zeal that feared the undermining of the national faith. In many places the opposition to the new type of readers included whole communities, and in one instance there arose an actual insurrection, due to the omission from the primer of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

In the interval between the Reformation and the nineteenth century there were of course many types of primers. Most of them preserved the prominent features of the older type, while including characteristics of the newer sort. The changes indicated above had in these three centuries introduced into school readers certain new elements: (1) a recognition of the child's tastes and aptitudes; (2) the use of other than religious reading; (3) the introduction into the school of such matter as the pupil might be supposed to continue to read after leaving school; and (4) recognition of the importance of method.

As in Germany, so in the United States, the dominant ideas of the people have determined the character of the school readers.[1] From the latter part of the seventeenth century to the end of the eighteenth century, *The New England Primer*[2] was the principal school book. It went through many editions, and its aggregate circulation probably reached several hundred thousand copies. Its origin, like that of the German primers, goes back to the Reformation. Henry VIII., while in conflict with the Church of Rome, caused a primer to be issued in 1534 (the same date as Ickelsamer's) with the title "A Prymer in Englyshe with certeyn prayers and goodly meditations, very necessary for all people that understonde not the Latyne tongue. Cum privilegio regali." In 1535 and again in 1545 he had primers reflecting the further modification of his religious views. The latter, known as the *Henry VIII. Primer*, was designated as

The New England Primer.

[1] See *The Historical Development of School Readers*, by Rudolph R. Reeder.

[2] See *The New England Primer*, by Paul Leicester Ford.

"The Primer set forth by the King's Majesty, and his Clergy to be taught, learned, and read, and none other to be used throughout all his dominions." As preliminary to this there was an A B C book containing the alphabet and a catechism. Later they became united; the A B C book was made to include also the substance of the Primer, and this combination soon reached a wide circulation. Both the A B C book and the primer were thus devotional books more elementary than the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, and were, like the German primer, religious in content and purpose.

One of the earliest enactments of the Puritans in New England was a requirement that every township of fifty or more householders should provide a teacher for instructing the children to write and read, that they might know the Bible.[1] Teachers of reading and writing and of the catechism had, indeed, been appointed soon after the landing of the Pilgrims. Out of this earnest religious purpose grew up a number of catechisms, the forerunners of the *New England Primer*. One Benjamin Harris, printer and author, finding London temporarily inhospitable to his religious opinions, opened a book-shop and coffee-house in Boston in 1686. While in England he had published in 1679 *The Protestant Tutor*, a book designed "to bring up children in an Aversion to Popery." It contained the "portrait of the reigning sovereign as a frontispiece, and portions of the text were the Roman Small Letters, the Syllabarium, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the John Roger biography and verses, though not the famous picture of the martyr at the stake, the words of from two to seven syllables, the Proper Names, and a catechism, together with much other material for the benefit of youth and the injury of Papacy."[2] This book was reissued in 1680, and again in Boston in 1685. Some time between 1687 and 1690 it was again issued in Boston, abridged and made more of a school book, under the title of *The New England Primer*.

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[1] *Records of the Massachusetts Bay Colony*, II. 203.

[2] Ford, *The New England Primer*, pp. 34–35.

It soon became *the* school primer of New England, and is known to have been printed in large numbers in the Quaker City of Philadelphia. Successive editions modified and puritanized the contents. For example, the rhymes and pictures given with the alphabet, which at first presented secular and familiar ideas, gave place to purely biblical matter:

The Lion bold		Lot fled to Zoar,
The Lamb doth hold.	became	Saw fiery shower,
		on Sodom's power.
Time cuts down all		Young Timothy,
Both great and small.	became	Learned Sin to fly.

The shorter catechism became a permanent part of the book. As successive editions appeared, various minor changes were made. In deference to the ideas of the new republic, the reigning sovereign's portrait gave place to that of Samuel Adams or of Washington. As the rigidity of Puritanism relaxed, the verses of the *Primer* grew less biblical; but in spite of all these minor changes, the essential tone of the *Primer* remained unchanged until the end of the eighteenth century. Like its predecessors of the time of Henry VIII., it was religious, even doctrinal, in character, was an introduction to the Bible, and in general, reflected, in New as in old England, the close connection between school instruction and religion.

Secularization of School Reading Matter.

After the Revolution the material of elementary instruction in reading in America underwent a change not unlike that which it passed through in Germany. With the growth of the colonies, their experiences in the Revolution and their contact with France, Puritanism lost something of its ascendancy and a more secular tone entered into the school books as it had into the life of the people. This change of tone is clearly foreshadowed even in the *Primer*. In other school readers moral lessons, not biblical and often prudential only, found a place. The widely

popular aphorisms of Franklin, poetry and stories, and fragments of patriotic speeches, were now inserted. The leading books of this type were the spelling-book and school reader of Noah Webster, issued near the end of the eighteenth century.

No school book has had so wide a circulation in this country as Webster's Speller. It is still in use in many schools, and in its various editions has probably reached a circulation of near one hundred millions. The earlier editions contained reading matter as well as orthography and orthoepy.

The Webster Speller.

"The edition in use previous to the revision of 1831 comprised 168 pages, 14 of which are introductory; 66 contain words taken from the dictionary; 29 pages contain the names of persons, places, etc.; 47 contain reading lessons; 8 contain pictures and fables; 4 contain numbers, abbreviations, explanations of the characters used in writing, and a census of the United States. The edition published in 1831 contains several poems, a moral catechist, including abstract treatises on humility, mercy, anger, justice, gratitude, avarice, frugality, industry, etc.; precepts concerning the social relations, in which the young man, young woman, husband, wife, parent, and child are all briefly instructed and admonished concerning their duties and responsibilities. Eight pictures illustrate as many fables, the first of which is the story of the boy that stole apples, which Mr. Scudder (in his life of Webster) says he has never been able to trace back of Webster, but through him it has become part of our mental furniture. This story, with the picture of the old man in his continental coat, knee-breeches, and high hat; that of the enterprising but unfortunate milkmaid, who would have a green gown with the profits of milk, eggs, and chickens yet to be hatched; poor Tray in bad company; the farmer interviewing the lawyer, whose ox first was and then was not the gored one, were all read and re-read a hundred times by the millions of boys and girls who toed the mark and spelled in a row."[1]

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[1] Reeder, *Historical Development of School Readers.*

Webster's reading-book was the third of the series known as a Grammatical Institute of the English Language. (A grammar was the second of the series.) The reader bore its table of contents and its purposes on its title-page: "An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking, calculated to improve the mind and refine the taste of youth, and also to instruct them in the Geography, History, and Politics of the United States. To which are prefixed rules in Elocution, and directions for expressing the principal passions of the mind. Being the third part of a Grammatical Institute of the English Language, by Noah Webster, Jr., Esquire."

The "Institute."

Within the nineteenth century the contents of readers in the United States have been of different types: (1) the graded word lessons, in which the reading matter is made to order, much after the fashion of the Ollendorff method, rather for the sake of introducing easy words than for any sense or form; (2) the "moral tales," which held their ascendancy until a comparatively recent period; (3) the patriotic selections, mainly from our own poets and orators, which are still recognized and defended, and confined mainly to the years beyond the primary school; (4) the "information lessons," which are likewise retained; (5) purely literary extracts, ranging from nursery rhymes and tales to selections from Wordsworth and Tennyson.

Nineteenth Century Readers.

As we have already shown, the ideals of contemporary civilization have largely determined the selection of the primary reading. In the development of educational thought there came a time, however, when the pedagogical ideal prevailed; when the reading matter was selected largely with reference to its power to maintain the interest of the children and to facilitate the process of learning to read, as in the work of Basedow and Rochow in Germany, and in readers like those of McGuffey in the United States.

Principles of Selection.

The third stage of the movement came in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when out of disbelief in the peda-

gogical effectiveness of the graded "exercises," and in the cultural value of the moral tales and information lessons, there grew an attempt to select as school reading material that which should combine the desired literary worth with the qualities of thought and style suitable to the teaching of young children. These qualities, it was discovered, coexisted in a considerable amount of our good literature. A survey of the successful primary reading material of the present time indicates (1) that the pedagogical needs of the children, as now understood, are the principal element in determining the reading matter; (2) that these needs are understood to include (*a*) simplicity in thought and form of the material, (*b*) the use of familiar words, (*c*) the choice of material good in itself, either as information or as literature. Within these principles of choice there is, obviously, room for considerable variation, both from the literary preferences of the individual compiler and from his notions of the educational value and fitness of the material.

Present Standards.

The question of what to read thus seems to be reaching at least an empirical answer. But the answer is not of that final sort that precludes the necessity of further discussion. What, therefore, are the claims of the various types of reading matter given in the primary school? What relations have they to the work of the school as such, and to those larger purposes for which the school is instituted?

Books for Children.

1. Nursery rhymes, such as the *Mother Goose* nonsense rhymes, have found their way from the home into the school. Most of the *Mother Goose* rhymes have triumphantly stood the supreme literary test — that of time.[1] Some of them are centuries old; most of them are of respectable antiquity,[2] and their counterparts are found among most of the races of mankind. Such universality and persistence depend, of course, upon their power to please children;

Nonsense Rhymes.

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[1] Many of the modern followers of Mother Goose have written well. Notable among them are Edward Lear and Peter Newell.

[2] See the *Publications of the Percy Society*, IV.

and this is one reason for their place in the school-room. Children like the sounds, and remember them; they like the images, and remember them. Moreover, such simple and primitive rhymes and rhythm, such freedom in the realm of vocal sound, give these nursery classics a special educational value. When the child in the nursery, the kindergarten, or the primary school repeats to himself meaningless rhymes, or gibberish with or without meaning, he is giving one sort of training to his powers of speech just as truly as he is developing his motor system in his physical play. It is, in fact, to the play element in the child that these nonsense-rhymes especially appeal; and the value of play in early education has long been recognized.

To most children nothing can better make reading seem an acquaintance with real things than to read matter with which they are so well acquainted as with these nursery favourites; and a sense of the reality of reading is of prime importance. To children who have not already known this child literature, it seems to most of us like a tardy recognition of their natural rights to give it to them in school. The phrases and the ideas contained in it are among the common literary property of the race, used with more frequency and more generally understood than the fragments from greater classics.

On the other hand, it is objected that nonsense furnishes no mental food, that children should be given only what has logical connection, and that there is plenty of material for children that is equally entertaining and more sensible. To the last objection, primary teachers are likely to reply that they have not found the material abundant; to the first and second, that the demonstrated value of play in education has rehabilitated *Mother Goose*.

Literature of Familiar Things.

2. Scenes of home-life in poetry, story, and description are excellent primary reading-matter. Children have a lively interest in these familiar things. Domestic animals, toys, games, food, nature, and all the elemental things that enter into their little world are to them matters of grave importance. Some of these things have

found expression in literature simple enough for six-year-olds. Whenever the author gets the child's point of view and writes of what the child knows, he can get a hearing. Such literature has, like the nursery rhymes, the value of making the reading-lesson seem to the child to deal with real things. But for the trivial, the commonplace treatment of these things in made-to-order books, the present writer sees no place, unless it be for the sake of mere drill.

3. Stories and accounts of primitive life have a special interest for young children. Waiving the discussion of the "culture-epoch" theory — that every child epitomizes in his development the experiences of the race in its progress from barbarism to civilization — as not appropriate here,[1] we may confidently assert the interest of children in these types of life. The concreteness of such life is attractive; the lions in the path of the cave-dweller are no allegorical lions of the mind, but real beasts to overcome. The struggles of the savages are with things that the boy can picture: real enemies with bow and club, real hunger and thirst. The Indian is troubled with no chaotic yearnings, no hunger and thirst after righteousness; or, if so, with the simpler forms of these wants as they are known to childhood. This absence of complexity in primitive life enables the child to see clearly the fundamental relations of life: man hunting, fishing, learning simple handicrafts and forming into families and tribes as a means of continuance of life itself. The primitive virtues, like physical courage and self-restraint, which are known to the child, stand clearly revealed. The crudity and cruelty of such life seldom shock him: he is too little acquainted with pain to suffer by imagining the physical sufferings that belong to barbarous life. In brief, the life of the savage is very near to the boy of the twentieth century. Nor is this sympathy at all incompatible with the fact that the fortunate child of to-day is far removed from the

Primitive Life.

[1] For discussions of this theory see the Introduction to H. M. Scott's *Organic Education*, Boston, 1899, and the *Proceedings of the Herbartian Society*.

primitive savage: do not cultivated men still enjoy the battle scenes of Homer?

Fairy Stories.

4. Still nearer to the child is the fairy story. He lives in the far away; or, to speak more accurately, his imagination brings the remote constantly into his daily life. The world of faery is his ideal world, where poetic justice reigns supreme, where good is punished and evil rewarded, where the normal aspirations of childhood for the beautiful are fully realized, where there are no troublous limitations and contradictions as in real life. The simplicity of the fairy realm lays bare to him principles of right and justice that remain clouded in the real world, — as, indeed, they often are to his elders. In the fairy world he escapes from this sense of perplexity and finds life "as it ought to be." Of course he knows it is not real; knows that it is make-believe. But it is good for him to become acquainted with perfection, even in make-believe.[1]

The fairy story has been condemned because it is not "true." What its critics probably mean is, that it is not fact, or not true to all the phases of life. But to exclude all but fact is practically to exclude art of whatever kind; to rob the imagination of its principal source of pleasure and one of its best forms of exercise; to deprive the child of a treasury of memories that is in fact his hereditary right. The true grounds of objection are (1) against fairy stories which do not have the qualities of art, and (2) against the employment of fairy stories to the point at which the child loses his interest in real life.

Fables.

5. The fable is also near to the life of the child. His animistic tendencies make it seem quite natural to him that animals should talk like men. His interest in animals makes the homely forms of the fable more real to him: the transition from speaking animals to men

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[1] See Kenneth Graham's *The Golden Age*, Chicago and London, 1895, and other recent stories of child life, for a presentation of the child's view of life coloured by that of the adult.

and women seems natural and easy. The fable is one of the oldest forms of teaching. Its origin is in the far East; and its ethics are of the primitive type, sometimes of a type which the finer feeling of to-day rejects. Its brevity, its unity, and its simplicity of style make it easy to read. Like the nonsense rhyme and the fairy story, it is part of the literary possessions of the race, recurs again and again in literary and common allusion, and is thus one of the links between the primary school and the later intellectual life.

Ethics of the Fable.

One notable objection has been made to the fable for school purposes. Professor Felix Adler has pointed out[1] that many of the fables, particularly those collected under the name of Æsop, reflect a despotic civilization, in which the weak are crushed by the strong, and cunning wins over better qualities. "A really moral spirit is wanting in them; the moral motives are not appealed to. The appeal throughout is to the bare motive of self-interest." This objection seems to assume, not only that the child will accept the ethics of the fable, but that their effect will be permanent. It is at least doubtful whether he will see in the fable anything more than an interesting story. If he does, it is not likely that the selfish ethics there depicted will prove so attractive as to influence him deeply. Such an objection seems indeed to imply too much confidence in the permanence of the earliest moral teaching. The child's first morals are distinctly rudimentary. He grows from none at all through the lower to the higher. If his development were to cease at the age of seven, then we might well challenge the morals of the fable. Again, if the child were deeply affected by the sense of injustice and cruelty that the more analytic adult finds in these stories made under an old-world despotism, are they therefore to be excluded? Is it good that *all* his reading should represent conditions ideally perfect? Must he not early come to know something of life as it is? Is the

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[1] Adler's *Moral Instruction for Children*, New York, 1892, pp. 81–94.

school to continue to present life to him only as he finds it is not?

Myths.

6. The myth, like the fable, is an old-world product.[1] It is an early and imaginative people's attempt to preserve its ideas and experiences.[2] It falls into several broad divisions: (1) the attempt to explain some natural phenomenon, like the rising of the sun or the return of spring; (2) the celebration of the deeds of some hero and benefactor, like Hercules or Hiawatha; (3) the records of how some custom or invention came to be; (4) some knowledge or inference regarding human nature, like that of the fable. This classification does not always hold in a clear-cut way for particular myths; but these are the elements that myths contain. All of these things are within the interests of children. Many of the myths tell their meaning so simply that a child may understand. But whether he understands or not, the story itself is so concrete and so interesting that he hears it with delight. It is not essential that the teacher should insist on his understanding the meaning. Let him get the story, and grasp the meaning when he can. The story, after all, is the thing. The story is what he needs to know in order to appreciate the significance of the many allusions to the myth which he will meet in his later reading.

The English Bible.

7. Under different religious and social conditions the Bible was an integral part of early instruction. What moral gravity and what effects upon the imagination it wrought, we know. Modern custom has neglected it, and modern laws have sometimes forbidden it in the schools. The disuse of it is to be deplored quite as much as the abuse of it

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[1] Every observer must have noted that myth-making is still in progress: *e. g.*, the Lincoln myth. The present discussion refers to such myths as are read in the school, like the Greek, the Teutonic, and the Indian myth in Hiawatha.

[2] See Fiske's *Myths and Myth-makers*, chapter 1, Boston, 1891; Lang's *Custom and Myth*, New York; and Pater's *Greek Studies* (Dionysus, and Demeter and Persephone) New York, 1895, and chapters 16 and 17, Part I. of Grote's *History of Greece*.

for narrow sectarian purposes is to be condemned. The King James version is one of our greatest literary treasures. It has permeated our English literature, in thought and phrase.[1] It has furnished scenes, characters, and sentences rich in their applicability to the life of all times. It has been a storehouse for poets and moralists alike. To lose it from the schools is to leave thousands in ignorance of it; for the church no longer reaches the multitude. It is to be hoped that the time is near when it can be read as the great literature it really is, without obscuration of its beauty by the prejudices of sects or the smoke of ignorant commentary.[2] Many of the stories of the Old Testament — like those of Ruth, or of Jonah, or of Jacob, or of David and Jonathan; much of the New Testament, like the parables, the Sermon on the Mount, and the other ethical teachings, could be read by primary children. The exclusion of the Bible from the schools is only another of the many unfortunate phases of religious prejudice. In a truly liberal and dispassionate community no such objection could arise.

8. Poetry forms a considerable part of primary reading-matter. Not only may we include poetry written for children, like the simple and pleasing rhymes of Field, Stevenson, Riley, and others, but such of the poetry written for adults as is within reach of childish minds. Of this latter sort are many things of Wordsworth, Tennyson, Longfellow, Whittier, and other modern poets, and some of the easier ballads. There are some good collections of verse that contain much for the little children: Whittier's *Child Life in Poetry*, Patmore's *Children's Garland*, and Palgrave's *Children's Treasury of English Song* are among the best. Poetry.

To the teacher of English it seems hardly worth while to point out the linguistic and educational value of poetry for young children. Its ideal presentations of human life, its treatment of the beauty of nature, its rhythmic and memorable

[1] See A. S. Cook's *The Bible and English Prose Style*, Boston, 1892.

[2] The National Educational Association has recently put itself on record as deploring the neglect of the Bible as literature. See *Proceedings of the N. E. A.*, 1902.

form, justify its presence in the school. Moreover, if the reading of poetry is good for adults — as would hardly be disputed — an early and continuous familiarity with poetry in the school course seems a likely way of decreasing somewhat the neglect of poetry by adults.

9. Other forms of literature, not already classified, have a place in primary work. Tales of travel and adventure, descriptions of strange places, information, and whatever enlarges the mental horizon find favour, provided only that they be simple enough and near enough to the mental life of the children to be assimilated. In the foregoing classification we have had in mind only those books that can be read by the pupil himself. As a matter of fact, the list of what he can enjoy is much fuller than is implied here. Many things can and should be read to him which he cannot read for himself. He can enjoy hearing Homer before he can read fairy stories for himself.

Other Forms.

IV. The Beginnings of Reading

The discussions over the methods of teaching reading have been more numerous, more divergent in points of view, more given to minute analysis, more heated, more productive of vagaries, but in the outcome more conclusive, than the discussions regarding what to read. For many centuries the prevailing method was to begin with the names of the letters of the alphabet and to combine these into words. Naturally the child had to reach by his own inference a knowledge of the sound of the letter in its place in the word. To the beginner, *dee-o-gee*, would spell *deeogee*, and not *dog*, and might as well be given in the Greek *delta-omicron-gamma*, so far as any real representation of the sound of the word is concerned.[1] That the necessary inference from the *name* of the letter to its sound can be made is established by the fact that children have learned to read by this method. But that

The Alphabet Method.

[1] Stanley Hall's *How to Teach Reading*.

teachers should so long have overlooked the obvious source of the difficulty, failing to see that the child at first tends to make that combination of sounds which he actually hears, is one of the marvels of educational history; a marvel surpassed only by the fact that nearly four centuries after the needless subtlety of the method was pointed out by Ickelsamer,[1] teachers should occasionally take it up just as it was when he showed its error in principle.

The particular service rendered by Ickelsamer was to show that the difference between the sounds and the names of the letters offered a difficulty to beginners, and to recommend that at first the *sound* of the letter instead of its name be used. He separated the letters of the alphabet into classes distinguished by the position of the vocal organs, and taught first those that, like *o* and *a*, were simple and distinctive. He suggested mnemonic associations, as, for example, *a* is the sound made first in saying axe, *o* the sound that the driver uses to stop his horses, etc. The sounds of words and the letters representing those sounds were to be learned side by side. There was to be practice in speaking the words, and certainty that the thing read was understood. In analyzing a word into its sound elements, he would give to the child an image not only of the written or printed letter, but also of the object or animal which could suggest the sound of each letter. For example, if the word *März* (March) was to be learned, the pupil first analyzed the word into its sounds: *M*, that of the cow beginning to low, *ä* the sound made by the goose, *r* the sound of the snarling dog, and *z* the twittering of the sparrow. Then, lest the mnemonic device be not vivid enough, the pupil would point out, among a collection of pictures on a chart, the cow, the goose, the dog, and the sparrow! If this naive belief in mere method provokes a smile, we should remember that the principle from which he worked was sound, and that Ickelsamer not only was two hundred years or more ahead of his time in his wiser recommendations

Ickelsamer's Method.

[1] His book for beginners was issued at Marburg in 1534.

regarding the teaching of reading, but also that he published a grammar whose protest against the Latinization of German grammar, whose disbelief in the efficacy of "conjugating" and "declining" as a means of learning correct speech, and whose plea for the dignity and value of the vernacular would all find favour among modern scholars.

Other beginners' books — two within the same decade — advocated the same methods. But they were unable to bring about any extensive reform in the prevailing usage.

The Play Element: Buno.

Buno,[1] who anticipated Basedow's method of giving the children rewards for answering rightly, thought that the letters were in themselves fearful things for the children, and advised that they should be associated in the minds of the learners with some natural object, which should be drawn to resemble, as nearly as possible, the form of the letter. Thus *b* was represented by a strawberry, *u* by the horns of an owl, *h* by a hen. In teaching the letters he used a story of a somewhat crude type about the stupid Hans who was learning to read, and on this strung incidents and objects suggesting the letters. When the letters were thus learned, they were combined into syllables, much in the fashion of the *a-b-abs* of the books of a generation ago. Finally, the pupils were put to reading whole sentences.

Within the hundred years following Buno's work, no important contribution was made to the method of teaching reading. Imitators of Buno rang changes upon his method. Basedow (see page 84) sugar-coated the old letter-method. Rousseau, whose influence extended into Germany, advised alleviating the task by postponing it and arousing interest. The next important advocates of better methods were Olivier, Heinicke, and Pestalozzi, at the end of the eighteenth century. Olivier insisted that the sentences to be read should first be spoken by teacher and pupils, be clearly apprehended, and sharply enunciated, that the organs of speech might also be exercised. The words were

Emphasis laid upon Sound: Olivier.

[1] Buno's reading-book was issued at Dantzig in 1650.

then divided into syllables, and the syllables into vowels and consonants. The consonants were so pronounced as to exclude as much as possible the breathing which links a vowel-effect to the pure consonant sound. Those consonants which preceded a vowel or consonant were given with the obscure *e* following, those which followed a vowel with the obscure *e* preceding. Combinations of consonants were sounded together, *sch* in *Fleisch*, for example, being given as *esh*. When the pupils had learned thus to analyze words into their elementary sounds, the letters were taught. The consonants were classified and named according to the speech-organs used in enunciating them. Illustrated charts recalled the letter, not by the initial but by the final consonant sound: a tulip recalled the *lp* in *Tulpe*. The final syllables were printed in red letters. When the pupils had learned to read written syllables and words, the master gave them the book and taught them word by word and sentence by sentence that which they had already thoroughly learned. Contemporary with Olivier's was the work of Heinicke. His efficiency in the cause of sound education was due largely to his power of ridicule and invective against the folly and stupidity of the unnatural letter-method. He recommended that the consonants, the main cause of the trouble, be sounded only in connection with the vowels, that is, in syllables.

To the same period belongs the work of Pestalozzi. His general influence on modern education has been dwelt upon overmuch, and has no special bearing upon the subject of the present chapter. In his instruction in the elements of reading, he dwelt with special emphasis upon the importance of arousing interest and self-activity, of cultivating the ear in home and school by letting the child hear right speech clearly enunciated, and of making the child adept in reading and making combinations of letters into syllables. Not the names of the letters, but their sounds, singly and in combinations, were to be learned. A typical page from his primer will show his method: —

Pestalozzi's Work.

The word *gebadet* is to be developed. The teacher gives,

g.	What is it?	Answer *g.*
e is added	" " "	" *ge.*
b " "	" " "	" *geb.*
a " "	" " "	" *geba.*
d " "	" " "	" *gebad.*
e " "	" " "	" *gebade.*
t " "	" " "	" *gebadet.*

The lack of ideas in such a lesson, and the ease with which it could become merely formal and mechanical, are obvious. Pestalozzi himself and some of his admirers later became doubtful of its wisdom. Although Pestalozzi attempted to formulate scientific principles for his method, beginning with the training of the organs of speech, and passing to the study of words and then of connected discourse, it cannot be seen that his contributions to this particular phase of education were of any higher value than those of his contemporaries, or, indeed, equal to his wisdom regarding the more general problems of education.

Stephani.

Among the immediate successors of Pestalozzi, and in the list of those to whose efforts were due the establishment of modern methods, was Heinrich Stephani. His method, which consisted in laying stress upon the oral work, in using the sounds of the letters and in advancing by easy and simple combinations to the reading, was adopted by the Prussian Minister of Education in 1841. The victory of the sound-method over the letter-method was now established, in spite of the extravagance of views of some of its advocates, whose elaborate classification of the sounds of the alphabet into minute phonetic divisions, with long compound names to be learned by the children, resembled the fetich of method set up by Ickelsamer, Buno, and others.

The "write-read method" (Schreiblese-Methode), so-called, is old. The Greeks and Romans made use of it: Quintilian[1]

[1] *De Oratore*, I. 27.

and Plato[1] assume it as the usual thing. Comenius and Ratichius advocated it in the seventeenth century. It was argued pro and con in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Its opponents asserted that it doubled the difficulty of learning to read by requiring two things to be learned at once; its supporters, that the interest and self-activity of the child made the learning of each process easier. The child's pleasure in himself making the same words which he has heard and read, the necessarily closer attention to the form and order of the letters, and the increasing sense of power in the lessons, are obvious advantages of the method. Its adoption was due mainly to the vigorous defence of Grafer and others in the early nineteenth century. Its use is now general in Germany, France, England, and the United States.

The "Write-Read Method."

The analytic-synthetic method of teaching reading, though it had its roots in part in the work of earlier centuries, belongs in its clear and definite form to the early nineteenth century. It was the invention of a Frenchman, Jacotot, and was introduced into Germany by Gedike. Jacotot's own accounts of his method[2] were not clear or satisfactory. He seems not to have had the power of presenting his ideas in clear and logical form, to have been given to oracular deliveries such as "All is in all," and "Nothing is in nothing," and to have held such Utopian beliefs as that all persons have like abilities. In his teaching, however, he seems to have shown rare ability in applying fundamental principles. He asserts that he does not oppose nature, but imitates her. For the mind, he says, proceeds from the whole to its parts. Children learn the songs, and then the musical notes; the plant, and then the stamens; why then not the word and the sentence, and then the letters? Why not proceed here from the whole to the parts, from the known to the unknown?

The Analytic Method: Jacotot.

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[1] Laws, VII. 818.

[2] See *Enseignement universel, Langue maternelle*, par. J. J. Jacotot, 1818.

In his teaching he would begin with Fénelon's *Télémaque*, and have the children learn the first sentence, repeating it after the teacher, word by word, until the whole had been thoroughly learned. Thus

Calypso
Calypso ne
Calypso ne pouvait
Calypso ne pouvait se
Calypso ne pouvait se consoler, etc.,

until her inconsolability over the loss of her hero had been thoroughly established. The sentence was then written by the children from the copy. The teacher would go slowly, that the child might learn all thoroughly. The second lesson began with a review of this first sentence, and proceeded to the second. In all succeeding lessons the children were to reproduce orally and in writing what they had learned before. After ten lessons or more, the teacher would question them upon the content of what they had read. Throughout the series the object was to have the whole story reproduced without error by the children. If there was too much insistence upon memory, there was, at any rate, a justifiable emphasis upon the story as a starting-point.

The word-image and the thought are here seen to be of first importance. It is easily seen, too, that the child's powers of analysis, whereby he can arrive at the sounds of the letters and so become self-helpful, are trained only incidentally, if at all. The supreme merit in the system is that it deals first with ideas appreciable by the child and impresses upon his memory the image of the word. Letzsam presented the theories of Jacotot in clear form in a series of writings, simplified and modified them so as to retain only their good features, united them with other sound theories in use in Germany, and so demonstrated their excellence that they were adopted by law in Breslau in 1846.[1]

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[1] For a full account of present methods, see Kehr, *Praxis der Volksschule*.

With the work of Jacotot and its betterment at the hands of its German advocates in the middle of the nineteenth century we reach the end of our brief historical survey. As was said above, all the important contributions to the theory of the subject are included within the scope of their experiment and inquiry. Only the larger features of the movement have been sketched here, and those with unsatisfactory brevity. Students of the problems involved are referred to the historical sources given at the beginning of the chapter.

Even a brief account of the history of methods must take note of the use of pictures and reading-machines. According to Kehr[1] the origin of the pictured primers is to be traced to the pictured Bibles of the cloister. The pictured primer existed as early as the fifteenth century, and a number are known to have been issued in the sixteenth century. The best known of the early illustrated school books is, however, the *Orbis Pictus* of Comenius, issued in 1657. Though not the first, as is often said, this book of Comenius is from its wide influence to be regarded "as the real father of all picture books for children." The most common use of pictures was, as in the work of Comenius, to represent some creature known to the child, whose cry expressed or resembled some sound of the alphabet, the letter and the syllable accompanying the picture; or to represent the *form* of the letter, as, for example, the common fashion of representing the German *a* by an eel. Sometimes the pictures and letters were accompanied by little verses — the method adopted in *The New England Primer*. Writers of a more inventive turn of mind made up stories or comparisons of the letters with known objects, to deepen the impression upon the mind of the child. In the nineteenth century pictures came to be used to represent the object upon which the child's attention was to be fixed, and which was to be made the subject of the lesson in language.

Pictures.

The reading-boxes, or reading-machines, were devices to

[1] *Geschichte des Lese-Unterrichts*, p. 19.

secure the interest and self-activity of the pupils in learning to read. Their essential elements were generally a lot of movable blocks or dice on which were stamped the letters of the alphabet. These were to be fitted into a framework so as to spell syllables and words. Sometimes the blocks were coloured, oftener plain. Some of the machines were of a construction so elaborate that the descriptions of them convey but a vague idea to the lay mind. Reading-machines were in use by the philanthropinists and still continue to be made and used. The nursery alphabet-blocks of the present day are in principle like the simpler reading-machines.

Reading-Machines.

In the foregoing historical sketch almost all the principal elements now included in the best plans for the primary work in reading are represented. The various devices for relieving the work of its dulness or its terror appear in Ickelsamer, Buno, and Basedow; the emphasis upon the sound rather than the name of the letter appears in Ickelsamer, Buno, and Pestalozzi; the importance of beginning with an idea and proceeding by analysis to the sounds of the syllables and letters was shown by Jacotot; the increased interest and self-activity gained by early combining the reading and the writing, the desirability of having simple and interesting material, and the help afforded by pictures, had all become accepted principles by the middle of the nineteenth century.

Summary.

There is, therefore, little that is new or distinctive in modern methods, except a judicious blending of the various principles and devices of earlier teachers. "The growing agreement that there is no one and only orthodox way of teaching and learning this greatest and hardest of all the arts, in which ear, mouth, eye, and hand must each in turn train the others to automatic perfection . . . is a great gain, and seems now secure." [1] Indeed it may be doubted whether any definite method or system could be devised which would not become harmful, by growing stiff and mechanical. It is

[1] Hall's *How to Teach Reading*.

principally in the recognition of the participation of ear, mouth, eye, and hand in the work, of the necessity of beginning with wholes instead of parts, and of emphasizing the sounds at the initial stages of the instruction, that modern primary work has made its greatest advances.

The first steps in learning to read are difficult. In oral language there is often a resemblance between sound and idea. But in written language the signs are purely arbitrary and conventional. There is no logical reason why the written English word which is to recall the concept should appear in its present form rather than in the Greek or any other foreign alphabet or in the Morse code. The beginner must learn it in whatever form he happens to find it. The process of analysis involved in separating the word into its component parts, both as letters and as sounds, is difficult. Such a word, for example, as *blackboard*, consists of eight component parts as sound, and ten letters. The pupil must learn not only to recognize the word in print and script, and to know what thing it recalls, but must know it as made up of these elements of sound and these letters. In English, the difficulty is still further increased by the fact that the language is imperfectly phonetic. The letter *g* has one sound in *go*, and another in *gentle*; *c* is *k* in *cat*, and *s* in *city*. The selection of vowels in modern English has slight relation to the sounds represented. *A* does duty for at least five sounds. *I* appears with a range of too great variety: as in *machine*, *fit*, *wine*, *bird*. *Ough* is distracting: *though*, *thought*, *through*, *tough*, and *plough* form a group arbitrary and unreasonable enough for tears. Then there are the "silent" letters, — not unwisely printed in italics in certain books of a few decades ago. Not without cause has been the debate over the best ways to teach children of tender years the art of reading English.

Difficulties of Learning to Read.

The alphabetical method once universal is now seldom used. Under this system the child began with the alphabet, and learned the letters by their names. Now, it is obvious enough, as was pointed out by Ickelsamer, that these names do not spell the word. But the pupil passed,

The Alphabet Method.

by much repetition, through his *a-b-abs* into the knowledge of the sound intended by certain combinations of letters. Then through various collections of simple words, either meaningless and uninteresting, or didactic and equally uninteresting, the pupil came to a greater or less degree of power in reading. Exceptions were wisely treated as such, and as things to be learned. Much drilling in oral reading and oral spelling insured a fair knowledge of the form of the words, but at such a price of time and energy as a modern school cannot afford to pay.

In the agitation of "methods" two new plans arose: the "word method" and the "sentence method." The advocates of each defended their system most vigorously. At bottom the two are not so different in principle as might seem, and are certainly not different enough to account for the fervour of the debates they have provoked. Each begins from a larger unit than the alphabetic sounds, and with something that can convey an idea to the child. The "word method" begins, as its name implies, by having the child learn the *word*, and, when a sufficient number of words can be recognized, learn the elements of the word, and words already combined into sentences. The "sentence method" begins with the sentence and leads the pupil to identify words, and gradually to know the letters and their sounds. Each assumes — and rightly — that the child should start from an idea expressed in type or script, and come by process of analysis to the knowledge of the elements, before attempting to combine minute and arbitrary elements into a known word. Each defers the learning of the names of the letters until the child has learned to read. The dispute about the merits of the respective systems is about over, or heard only as echoes in certain regions remote from the centres of educational activity.

"Word Method" and "Sentence Method."

Out of the controversies in educational periodicals and teachers' institutes, and out of the experiments in the schoolroom, there has grown up a sort of consensus about the beginnings in teaching reading. A few general principles, sanely

and tactfully applied, have now taken the place of elaborate systems, and with better results.

The wise teacher knows that she must first accomplish two things with her primary class: (1) learn something of the range of their interests and ideas; (2) get them into a responsive attitude towards her. "Every child who enters the school-room . . . brings with him, not an empty head, but a mind stored with the memories of varied experiences. . . . What he has seen and heard, liked and desired, determines the net result of our teaching. For nothing which we attempt to teach finds lodgment in the child mind unless it is linked with some past experience and awakens actual interest."[1] Hence the desirability of beginning with an interesting object, picture, or story, and engaging the children in conversation about the thing seen or heard. When the teacher has thus elicited remarks from the children, some of these remarks may be written upon the board, and the children be told the meaning of each sentence. The sentences should contain some of the more important words several times. Suppose a story has been told of a dog. Talk about dogs could bring out something like the following:

The First Steps.

My dog can bark.
My dog can bite.
My dog eats meat.
My dog is black.

The teacher could point to each word as she read the sentences. The repeated word *dog* would soon be recognized, and the children required to observe it carefully. Similar exercises, continued several times a day, would soon make the children familiar with a number of simple words, and so afford a basis for the next step in the instruction.

The more definite work of teaching reading now begins: resolution of the words into their phonetic elements. Sup-

[1] *Reading, How to Teach It*, by Sarah Louise Arnold.

pose the children have come to recognize *bat*, *cat*, *rat*, and the new word *mat* is seen. The sound of *at* is known from the other words; the teacher will then call upon them to observe the similarity of sound in those words and the similarity of form in the last part. The children, we will assume, have also learned in the same way the sound of *m*, as in *my*, *moon*, *man*, etc. They will then be called upon to give, first the sound of *m*, and then the sound of *at*, in as close succession as possible, and so get the sound of *mat*. This is a definite accomplishment for them, by the so-called "analytic-synthetic" method. The analysis has been made in getting a perception of the sound-values of the letters in the familiar words, and the synthesis in recombining these sounds into a new word. The pupil is thus put into possession of an instrument that he can use to help himself. Every sound or combination of sounds that he learns is not only so much clear gain in itself, but becomes a key to other words. Thus *rack*, *back*, *lack*, etc., become a key to *crack*, *black*, and other words similarly built.[1] Longer combinations of sounds or letters like *ing*, *ight*, *oard*, etc., may be introduced as the need arises.

Learning the Phonetic Elements.

In the use of this method it is evident that the teacher must keep track of the words already learned by the children, that she may give the helpful suggestion whenever needed. There must be frequent drill in the recognition of the words, that they may be exactly and readily known, and be of real service in helping to the knowledge of new words. There must be much drill in the resolution of the phonograms into their essential sounds: thus *old* would be resolved into the sounds *o-l-d*, and the sounds recombined into the sound of the whole syllable.

Importance of Drill.

It need not be feared that the work will be uninteresting. Children have a natural interest in words and sounds. The

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[1] For a fuller discussion of this method, see an article by E. G. Ward in the NEW YORK TEACHERS' MONOGRAPH, I. No. 3, November, 1898, on "The Rational Method in Reading."

imitative tendencies, so prominent in the mental life of children, can be used with great effect. The mere imitation of sounds, independent of their meaning, the fondness for strange, long, or musical words, the pleasure in gibberish and nonsense rhymes, which most children show, testify not only to their delight in imitation, but to their pleasure in making sounds for the mere sake of the sounds. They find satisfaction also in mere activity. The teacher will therefore find this tendency a constant resource in the early stages of language teaching, and will make use of it constantly in establishing an easy and indelible association between the written symbol and the sound. When this delight in mere activity is reinforced by a sense of achievement over difficulties, and by giving stuff to read that has some relation to their experiences or some charm for their imaginations, their interest can easily be held to the work. **Interest.**

One especial caution may be suggested to the young teacher. Children often read from their books without recognizing the individual words. They remember the stories verbatim. Every pupil in the class should frequently be tested by words, old and new, written on the blackboard. The teacher should assure herself that the children are not only able to recognize the words, but able to resolve them into their sound elements. By the end of the first year, or in the early months of the second year, the drill in phonetics should be a regular part of the daily work, and should be continued until the pupils have mastered it as a working method.

But English is only a partially phonetic language. It abounds in anomalies of spelling. Its system of vowel classification is wrong. And, as in other languages, the irregularities are most frequent in precisely those words which are most used. For these difficulties there is but one pedagogic rule. Exceptional usages, variations from the norm, and all isolated facts must be learned as such.[1] Rules are at first obviously a useless burden. *Light* is but little harder to learn than *bite*.

[1] Sweet, *Practical Study of Languages*, New York, 1900.

The child remembers it as a fact; and easily associates it with other words of the same sound-group, as *might, right,* etc. Experience has shown that the order of difficulty in form is not the only order — perhaps not even the principal order — to be followed. Many of the simplest and most common ideas are conveyed in words whose form is difficult; and it is inexpedient to postpone the introduction of such words until the pupil has mastered most of the words of simple form. Moreover, the word of unusual form is thereby easily recognized. Such are the auxiliaries, *might, could, would,* and *should;* names of familiar objects and ideas, *house, police, understand,* etc.; names of persons and places. It is more important that the pupil should come as soon as possible to the power of reading some form of connected discourse, something that will make the learning of all these arbitrary symbols seem a reasonable task, and that will provide him with material for thought. The timidity over words that are merely "big" is now seen to be as often invented by their elders as felt by the children. To the sweetness of much of modern education has been added light. Classes in the second grade, under ordinary conditions, can read *Hiawatha* without fear or stumbling. Give them but the *means* of coming at the sound of the word by using their knowledge of its elements, and the big word is exhilarating rather than depressing.

Training the Ear and the Vocal Organs.

It is not, however, to be assumed that children in the first years of school either hear or render all sounds correctly. Putting aside all considerations of dialectic variation, influences of foreign languages heard at home, and variations from the norm of vocal language due to defective hearing and imperfections in the organs of speech, there is still a considerable difference between sounds that pass as English from the lips of children and those from cultivated adults. Reference is not made here to the accuracy and range of the vocabulary, but to the clearness and precision of the spoken word. A quick ear will detect in the enunciation of children imperfectly articulated consonants, and vowels swerving from their proper quality. The word that the chil-

dren speak is not always the word which they hear. They may, for example, hear *insists*, and say *insiss*, without being aware of the difference. The present writer has often heard children say *pönt* when they thought they were saying *point*, *drawr* for *draw*, *New Yawk* for *New York*, etc. Such pronunciations are often due to dialectic peculiarities in the speech of the home. But in most cases it is noticeable that the pupil does not at first *hear* the true sound, even when it is given in his presence. Sharp and clear-cut enunciation, not, of course, of the exaggerated type that errs by making obscure vowels full and gives to speech a pedantic preciseness like the too rigid separation of the words in such phrases as *at all*, *don't you*, and the like, but clean-cut pronunciation of the language as it is, should be a daily exercise in the lower grades. Much of the difficulty in getting control of the phonetic elements of the language may thus be overcome; and much may be done to remedy the blurred and obscure enunciation with which Americans are justly taxed by English visitors.

Where there is the influence of a foreign language daily heard and spoken in the home, or of dialectic variations heard at home, on the playground and perhaps from the teacher also, the case seems almost hopeless. When one considers the influence in our large cities of the Teutonic and Slavonic quality of the consonants, and the persistence of nasal twang or flattened vowels in communities of nearly pure American descent, one is fain to accept them as symptoms of that flux and growth of language for which the schoolmaster has no responsibility.[1]

The growing use of print as a means of communicating ideas tends to make us forget that language is in its essence as well as its origin *oral*, a thing of the vocal organs and the ear. In teaching reading we are teaching the art of quick and easy

[1] See Rein's *Encyklopaedisches Handbuch der Pædagogik*, article on "Mundart in der Volksschule;" Brander Matthews, *The Parts of Speech*, New York, 1901; A. S. Hill's *Our English*, New York, and Kittredge and Greenough, *Words and their Ways in English Speech*, New York, 1901.

association of the printed or written form with the auditory image and the idea. We must have the pupils ultimately reach a high facility in passing direct from the crowd of symbols on the page to the ideas they suggest. Good reading implies not merely the recognition at a glance of the idea for which the word stands, but that sentences and even paragraphs must be read "on the run." But in the primary grades the transition from printed symbols to idea is for the most part necessarily through the auditory image. Hence children and imperfectly educated adults may be seen to move the lips as they read. They are calling up more or less distinctly the sound image of the word. And this is well; the real word is a sound; it is a spoken and heard thing, — a "winged word." Nor is the swift absorption of the meaning of sentence or paragraph by the trained adult the whole art of reading well. The higher kinds of literature demand that the sound images be present while we read, or the reading is imperfect. Tennyson and Milton, when read as one reads the newspaper — for the idea only — cease to be literature in any real sense. One must *hear* Milton's verse, or he is not reading it. This delight in the mere sound of verse and of good prose is often seen in school children. By all means let it be fostered; it will minister not merely to clearness in reading, but to æsthetic enjoyment.

The Real Language is a Thing for the Ear.

Learning a language, whether the vernacular or a foreign language, is not a mere act of acquisition. Storing the memory is only one part of the process. There must be also reflection and expression. When one thinks in a language, one is learning it. When he puts his thoughts into connected discourse, he is gaining not merely a clearer notion of the meaning of the words and a better memory of them, but he is training his mind in seeing relationships. Without this element language study is not much above rote-work: it yields no training in thought. Nor, without the stimulus and interest of the thought element, can the acquisition of the language go satisfactorily forward. Hence arises the necessity for choosing, as the basis of primary in-

Relation between Reading and Expression.

struction in language, not only such material as will enlist the interest of the pupils, but such as will also afford the opportunity for the best training in thought which they are capable of receiving.

Before leaving the topic of the teaching of reading in its earliest stages, certain topics of minor importance but of considerable aggregate value must be briefly considered. Brief reference has been already made to the controversy of the "word method" *vs.* the "sentence method," and the conclusion drawn that no matter which be used the real work in reading, *i.e.*, the power to be self-helpful, begins when the pupil analyzes the word into its sound elements and letter elements, and makes of these elements the synthesis which presents a new word to his consciousness. It is therefore of some importance what words are taken for the first steps in this process.

Normal Words.

These first words,[1] called "normal words," must be chosen with reference (1) to their necessity in sentence building, *the*, *is*, *an*, etc.; (2) to their power of presenting an idea to the child which he can grasp and in which he is interested, as, *dog*, *boy*, *books*, *run*, etc.; (3) to their similarity of form to other words, in order that by inference the pupil can reach a conception of the relation between a certain group of symbols and a certain constant of sound, as in *bat*, *cat*, *hat*, etc. Many such lists of "normal words" have been offered. It is obvious that any effective list must be selected also with reference to the particular group of children with whom it is to be used. It must include only words which are already in their vocabulary, and which represent ideas familiar and interesting to them. For their first task is not to learn new words, but to learn old words under a new form.

The "normal" or "model" sentence used for the first exercises in reading should be selected in accordance with

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[1] See Kehr, *Geschichte des Lese-Unterrichtes*, pp. 109–110, and Ward, "Rational System of Reading," NEW YORK TEACHERS' MONOGRAPH, I No. 3.

similar principles. It must reach the interest and understanding of the pupils, must therefore embody familiar and simple words, and must be short enough to be easily grasped. In addition to these qualities it must have some real thought and be able to give some exercise to the child's reason or some satisfaction to his æsthetic faculty. Sentences made to order on the plan of the Ollendorf lessons in French and German, and involving impossible and absurd collocations of ideas, are not the type of sentence to cultivate the power of thinking. As Professor Sweet has pointed out,[1] the best model sentences are those which contain a rational idea and in which some familiar or necessary relation is set forth; so that the reader may get at the meanings of the words not only by the processes of analysis of their form, but by just inference. *The sun rises in the east, and sets in the west,* is a good example of such a model sentence.

Model Sentences.

Whether the lessons read by the child should be in script or in print is still in debate. Obviously, the print is simpler than the cursive script, since the letters in print are not run together, and since they are not subject to the same variations in form. But, on the other hand, the script can be seen to grow under the children's eyes, can be turned to account to record at once the ideas of the children, and is the form in which their own ideas are to find written expression; nor is the script of much greater difficulty than the print. Although the print is somewhat the simpler, the script seems, therefore, to be the more useful in the practical work of teaching reading.

Print or Script.

The objections to the use of the cursive script have been much lessened by the wide introduction of the vertical script as a substitute for the slanting script. This new form of writing is so much more legible, and is so much nearer in its general appearance to print, that the transition from script to print is comparatively easy. The principal

Vertical Script.

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[1] *Practical Study of Languages*, pp. 131 ff.

arguments[1] which have led to its general adoption are (1) that it can be written in a more erect and therefore more hygienic posture, and (2) that it is more legible because it is easier for the eyes to follow vertical than slanting lines, and (3) that it is more rapid. To these arguments it is objected (1) that the slanting script may also be written in an erect posture, (2) that it has more beauty, (3) that it is more rapid, (4) that it gives greater scope for individual variations in handwriting.

In some cities, as in New York, a modified form of the vertical has partly displaced the absolutely vertical, largely on the grounds of speed. In the present unsettled state of the matter, it seems safe to say only that while the advocates of the vertical script have the better of the argument as to legibility and hygiene, they have not had time as yet to demonstrate the superiority of their system for speed and individuality of form. A full test of these matters should be reached within a few years, when the children trained in the schools shall have taken sufficient part in active business life.

First Instruction in Writing.

Some difference of belief and practice still exists with reference to the first instruction in writing. That the earliest writing should be in large free hand, in pencil and on unruled paper, or with crayon on the blackboard, seems to be accepted. Young children have not sufficient co-ordination of nerves and muscles for the minuter movements; nor are such movements hygienic either in their effects on the nervous system or on the eyes. If forced upon the children too early, they are likely to result in a cramped and awkward movement that persists in the later handwriting. The earliest attempts should, of course, be imitative, and accompanied with no detailed instruction, except in the holding of the pencil or crayon.

As to the time when the work should begin, teachers differ.

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[1] See, for example, the pamphlets by C. H. Ames, published by D. C. Heath & Co., Shaw's *School Hygiene*, New York, 1901, and M. M. Bridges, *A New Handwriting for Teachers*, Clarendon Press, 1902.

The "read-write" method of teaching reading, which requires that writing be begun earlier, within the first two months of the primary work, seems to be sustained by experience. In some schools, however, no writing is allowed until the beginning of the second year, on the ground that, if begun earlier, (1) bad habits will be formed, (2) the children will have the double task of learning to read and write at the same time, and (3) the work of writing is too minute and particular a task for children under seven years of age. The last argument is answered by an appeal to experience, and the second has been answered in a previous paragraph. The first argument, the danger of the formation of bad habits, seems to ignore the recognized methods of growth in the mental life of children. In all their activities, both motor and mental, they grow by practice from the crude and imperfect to the less crude and imperfect. To delay the attempt at any kind of action beyond the point at which the child is ready and willing to make the attempt would be like postponement of the opportunity to walk or to talk when the impulse prompts to these activities. The sole question is, therefore, not at what age children can begin to write well, but at what age they can and will make the attempt to write. This period seems to be early in the first year of the primary school.

Reading Aloud.

Among the objects of the instruction in English is the oral rendering of the thought on the printed page. As the whole energy of the pupil is at first employed in making out the single words, oral reading is likely to be dull and monotonous. From the first, therefore, there should be practice in reading aloud sentences and stories that are known to the pupils, and others that can be read with considerable ease. To the same end the school exercises in oral reading should have in view as a purpose distinctly recognised by the pupils the conveying to the other members of the class and to the teacher the meaning of the sentence or the story. If the tone is monotonous, the pupil should be asked to put aside the book and *tell* the thing. Different renderings of the same sentence by various members of the class and by

the teacher will serve to show how the idea changes with the change of emphasis. Each pupil will thus show what the sentence means to him. The clear enunciation and correct pronunciation of the words, and the right use of the voice, will be seen in their real relations as a means of conveying ideas easily. That we speak to be heard and understood, is a point of view that children can well appreciate.

Among the devices familiar to many is reading "in concert."[1] It seems a simple means of securing the activity of all the pupils. But a little analysis of the process makes its value appear very doubtful. The slower pupils lag behind, or mumble some approximation to the right words that is lost in the general volume of sound; individual difficulties are thus lost sight of. Interpretation and expression are sacrificed to a meaningless and monotonous rhythm. A little careful drill of small groups of pupils, while the rest of the class are kept busy at their seats, will prove a much more effective way of giving individual help.[2]

Reading "in Concert."

In former paragraphs we have dwelt upon the importance of correct and clear enunciation. This should be sought not only in the general reading-lessons, but through the instruction of individuals or small groups of children. It should not ordinarily be needed beyond the first two years of school, if properly attended to in those years. Daily attention to clear speaking, with occasional exercises to break the habit of mumbling and to secure proper use of the vocal organs, will do much. The primary teacher has many things to learn; but surely a little training in the correct use of the organs of speech, and in suitable exercises for children, might without objection be added to her equipment for her important work.

Clear Enunciation.

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[1] J. M. Rice, *The Public School System of the United States*, and Sarah Louise Arnold, *Reading, How to Teach It*, 216–221.

[2] One of the authors has seen concert reading in which the teacher showed the skill of an orchestra leader in detecting variations and errors. Such skill in the teacher would, of course, remove one of the objections to the plan. — F. N. S.

In close connection with the foregoing topic the subject of "word analysis" presents itself for consideration. In the paragraphs on phonetics attention was called to the method of analyzing the words into their sound elements, as a necessary step in learning to read. In the earlier employment of the word and sentence methods, the error was often made of neglecting the analysis of words into their sound elements. The natural result was that children knew words imperfectly and incompletely, confused words of similar form with each other, and spelled absurdly. The only way of avoiding such carelessness seems to be to fix the attention upon the words not merely as wholes, but upon the parts of which they are made. This must be done (1) by careful attention to the elements of the spoken word, both in the auditory image and in the enunciation, and (2) by careful attention and frequent drill in the elements of the written word. Attention must be given to syllabification, connected with the sounds in words that are perfectly phonetic, and fixed by practice in writing in all words that vary from the phonetic norm. The memories of the sound, the articulation of the written form, and the motor movements of writing the words should reinforce and support each other; the difficulties in visualizing the words fully and clearly, or in getting the clear auditory image, should be noted and removed as far as possible by practice. Carelessness and indolence should, on the other hand, be recognized for what they are, and treated with the same tact and persistency applied to other moral delinquencies.

Word Analysis.

Modern conditions are not adequately recognized in elementary instruction unless account is taken of two widely different kinds of reading: the minute and careful, and the rapid and cursory. Some things are to be studied, others merely skimmed; and this distinction should appear in the earlier work. At first the attention is wholly absorbed by recognizing and analyzing the words. Then, when a certain facility is attained, some things are to be read with especial care, for the mastery of the idea.

Sight Reading.

At this point the child can be made to appreciate the necessity of rapid reading and of careful and repeated reading.

V. Composition in Elementary Schools

The teaching of composition in elementary schools has in recent years assumed considerable prominence. A half-century ago, in the common schools of this country, such teaching was much more limited in amount and kind. The theory of the instruction seems to have been that a knowledge of grammatical laws, of the meanings of words, of usage, of spelling, and of punctuation was for the elementary pupil the proper and sufficient preparation for the writing of the composition. To these things there was added drill in sentence structure and some instruction in figures of speech. Transcription of the copy-book sentence, and exercises in dictation, in letter writing, and in paraphrasing served for practice in acquiring the correct forms of written expression. Weekly or monthly set compositions were sometimes required. These were usually upon subjects either of a strictly informational character, such as the lives of notable men, or upon abstract subjects. Two characteristics of this instruction stand out quite clearly: (1) It proceeded from the part to the whole, that is, from the word to the sentence, and sometimes from the sentence to the paragraph. It laid emphasis upon the details, upon the forms and the various mechanical and conventional elements of the work before considering the entire composition. (2) Its treatment of the thought side of the work was inadequate. It either assumed that the material for writing was already in the child's mind, as in its choice of abstract subjects, or, as in its informational subjects, left the gathering and ordering of the material to the child's unaided efforts.

Earlier Aims and Methods.

Such a system was, of course, unsatisfactory. The insistence upon the mechanical side to the neglect of the ideas deprived the work of interest to both pupil and teacher, and made it perfunctory and artificial. Lacking ideas, it lacked both interest and dignity, and the instruction in

Their Defects.

English sank back upon spelling and formal grammar, where at least something definite and tangible could be found. That some good results were obtained is not to be denied. The emphasis upon "correctness" could not fail to have good effects in many cases. But of the larger aims of composition teaching, as now commonly understood, of the training in thought and in the gathering and ordering of material, of the sufficient practice that brings easy and orderly writing, the older type of instruction took no heed. In recognition of the defective standards once everywhere prevalent, Professor Laurie writes: "The word 'essay' is a hateful word; it is associated with so much in schools, especially girls' schools, that is false and hollow and showy." [1]

Since the recent general stimulus of interest in English teaching the fundamental principles of composition work have been variously apprehended. By some writers the emphasis is laid mainly upon practice;[2] by others, the training of the imagination has been given special importance,[3] and in the view of yet other writers the training in thought, both in the gathering and ordering of material and in the process of expression, is the principal object. According as the one or the other of these objects has been uppermost, the scheme of instruction has been determined both in material and in methods; hence the special emphasis upon daily themes, or upon the writing of original stories, or upon the systematic plans for gathering and arranging material. An important difference of opinion appears, too, as to the degree to which special instruction and drill in the laws of composition and the conventional matters of writing should be carried. Shall we begin by finding something interesting to write about, and give the attention first to arousing interest in the subject? Or shall we first insist upon the power to form sentences and paragraphs according to good rhetorical princi-

Present Problems.

[1] *Language and Linguistic Method.*

[2] See, for example, the Harvard Reports on English.

[3] See *The Problem of Elementary Composition*, by Elizabeth H. Spalding, Boston, 1896.

ples, and then seek for the interesting thing to say? What type of subjects shall then be chosen? Shall there be daily written exercises? Or less frequent writing, with more criticism? These and many other questions arise in the work of the elementary teacher.

The general aim of elementary composition teaching seems to the present writers to be, primarily, not the acquisition of an art, nor the cultivation of a science, but the training of the mind through the acquisition and expression of ideas. This view does not ignore the fact that writing is an art, or that in some degree the elementary study of language is a science; but it makes the purpose of teaching composition in the schools parallel with the purpose of teaching other subjects, that is, to lead the pupil to learn something and to express it clearly, either orally or in writing. A defence of this principle as a basis in teaching composition is no more needed than in other school subjects. It is indeed the general problem of instruction. Even the manual arts have the same end in view, though the expression there is through another medium than words.

The Aims: 1. Training in Thought through Expression.

Education is a process whereby the child is brought into intelligent and interesting contact with the world, with the material world about him, and with the world of the human spirit, both present and past: a process involving the growth of his own power and capacities by careful observation, correct inference, and adequate expression.[1] The teaching of composition should, we believe, aim at precisely these things. It succeeds when the pupil has learned to see, to think, and to express; when his mental life has grown richer and more interesting, his views of things more just, his knowledge and his inferences more clearly expressed. The purposes of teaching composition are, therefore, as was said before, the same as the aims of the rest of the curriculum. The same view is more radically stated by

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[1] See the well-known statement of President Eliot, EDUCATIONAL REFORM, 410 ff., New York, 1898.

Meiklejohn:[1] "The idea that composition is artificial, and the fact that we postpone the teaching of it until very late, give rise to the vulgar belief that it is a 'subject' like French, or Latin, or history. But composition is not a 'subject.' It is quite an ordinary practice — a very general activity. . . . If it is not a subject, oral composition ought to be begun as soon as the pupil can read, and written composition as soon as the pupil can write. In fact, writing and speaking are simply two forms of one mental act, — the act of expression."

Such a statement, however, goes too far. There is a certain body of facts and principles, some of them purely arbitrary and conventional, others logical and inherent in the nature of our mental processes, which must be taught principally in the lessons in composition. Some of these principles, though involved also in the teaching of other school subjects, such as the arrangement of ideas in clear and logical order, are most effectively presented in connection with composition; and many of the arbitrary and conventional facts of the language, such as spelling, punctuation, etc., are purely matters of the "subject" English. So that while the primary aim of the work is, as stated above, to train the mind through the acquisition and expression of ideas, the second aim must be to teach those facts and principles of language which are the necessary media of successful expression.

2. Teaching the Media of Expression.

If the foregoing aims be accepted as a proper basis for the work, the first consideration of the teacher is seen to be the gathering of the material. "Matter before form" is an educational dictum, rendered valid by both the interests and the powers of the children. Every observant teacher knows that children are interested in (1) the world of visible and external facts about them, (2) the world of story, whether history or fiction, (3) the explanation of things. He knows further that only certain types of facts in life and certain

Material for Composition.

[1] See Meiklejohn, *The Art of Writing English*. See also SCHOOL REVIEW, I. 660 ff., where Professor Barrett Wendell calls attention to the fact that most of the English teacher's knowledge is assumed to be common property.

types of action in story are apprehended by them, that the power of apprehension varies somewhat in the individual pupils and in different schools, and that, however active the child's interest in the reason of things, he can go but a little way in explanation or exposition.

In general, therefore, the material for composition must be drawn from the child's daily experience and from the stories which interest him. It must be selected, moreover, not merely by this general rule, but by means of the teacher's actual acquaintance with the experiences and interests of the class. Knowledge of the subject and interest in it are of the first importance. The unfamiliar and difficult act of writing is of itself a barrier to expression in the earlier stages of the work. The mere thought of having to "write a composition" is often enough to scatter the child's ideas to the four winds. Ask him, therefore, to tell on paper something which he knows too well to forget, and in which he is too much interested to be daunted by the mechanical difficulties of expression.

Interest and Knowledge Essential.

For the observant child — that is, for the child of normal type — life is full of such material. He talks of it freely and often; his mind has grown through such observations and expressions. But when he is asked to write his memories sometimes desert him. Here is the teacher's opportunity and duty, — to find the material that the pupil knows, and to bring him to the expression of it. A runaway horse, a fire alarm, an arrest, the construction of a building, a "sandwich man," or any one of the hundreds of striking objects and incidents seen on our city streets, may be selected. The child's home life, his games, his pets, or his toys will seem to him worth talking about. So, too, the stories that he has read, in school or out, are good material for his work in composition. Early in the instruction, the material that he has learned in other school subjects can be employed: his history, his science, or his manual training.

Types of Subject.

Pictures that tell a story or give a scene clearly can be interpreted in words.[1] In those that invite a comparison the pupil may note points of likeness or of difference. Such a challenge to the inventiveness of the pupil as this, or as in a partially told story which he is asked to complete, brings excellent results. The quantity of good material is, in fact, very large. If the composition work lacks interest, it must be because the teacher lacks either ingenuity or the capacity to enter into the interests of childhood. Life is everywhere interesting enough, and the normal child sufficiently alive.

Use of Pictures.

It is not enough, however, that the material should be interesting. It should be capable of use for the aim of composition teaching: the cultivation of the mind through thought and expression. It must be sufficiently knowable by the child to give him some clear and definite things to say, and it should stimulate his observation and his thought. In the later stages of the work, the material chosen should frequently afford opportunity for the ordering and arrangement of ideas into some sort of unified form. For example, such a topic as *How I Spent my Vacation* is not of the best; for it is likely to bring forth only a string of co-ordinate and more or less disconnected ideas, succeeding each other with a series of *ands*. A particular incident of such a vacation, as a fishing trip, or a boating accident, or a ride in the hay-field, is much more susceptible of the orderly treatment which results in good form. It is to be noted, too, that, especially in the lower grades, incidents are, in general, better than scenes; narration is better than description, for both interest and ease of telling.

Not only the matter but also the motives of the earlier exercises are important. The making of a sentence or a paragraph may not be a comprehensible or interesting purpose to

[1] Such pictures are now generally found in school books as well as in books made primarily for entertainment. The making of good and cheap reproductions of fine pictures is now common. See, for example, the catalogue of *The Cosmos Pictures Co.*, New York.

a young child; but the telling of a story or the writing of a letter will be. Why should one write, but to communicate ideas? A story or a message told in a letter, to be sent, as letters should be, to an absent acquaintance, will seem to the child a reasonable motive for writing.[1] So will the writing of a short story to be read to the class. As language always concerns two, him who talks and him who hears, or him who writes and him who reads, its employment in teaching should recognize this natural relationship.

First Exercises: Letters and Story-telling.

Considerable emphasis has elsewhere in the present volume been laid upon the value and necessity of oral language. In the employment of it one of the objects should be, as said before, to break down the barrier between oral and written composition. The pupil should realize that composition is with him "a habitual activity," that every time he talks he is composing, that the written composition is only the same thing in another form, though perhaps a little more carefully considered and executed, and that his habits of speech and of writing can each be brought to reinforce the other. Always in the lower grades, and often in the upper grades, the set composition should first be given orally: the ideas be told and retold and the telling criticised by various members of the class. Such a process bridges over the formidable gap between oral and written speech, making the latter distinctly easier and more natural.

Oral Composition.

After the earlier efforts, which should be very short and rather frequent, the interest can gradually be directed toward the forms. The conventions of writing and printing sanction certain usages, as seen in the books read and in the written language of the teacher. There are capitals, punctuation marks, fixed ways of spelling words, etc.; a sentence says something completely, and not in unrelated

The Formal Elements.

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[1] Excellent models for use in this kind of work are some of the letters of Phillips Brooks, Lowell, Dickens, Stevenson, Eugene Field, and Macaulay.

fragments. These matters must be learned, and when forgotten, as they will be many times, learned again. They are to be learned, moreover, not by rule, but rather by observation and practice, and fixed in memory by the simplest possible statement of the rule or principle. Not too much at once, and the most essential things first, are good working rules.

It is appropriate here to review some of the other common forms of school work in language. Among the first in place and value, is transcription. Professor Laurie has said:[1] "To make boys and girls sit down and write out, with due attention to legible writing and punctuation, prose paragraphs and poems from celebrated authors, is an admirable exercise. It gives linguistic material. At all ages, but especially in the earlier years of language-teaching, this exercise should be almost a daily one. . . . There is no strain in this exercise, and it is all the better for that." Such exercises are of special value for pupils who, through either carelessness or lack of memory, are deficient on the formal side. But the method might be easily abused. The choice of material not interesting or intelligible to the child, or too long in quantity, could only bring disgust with the process. Moreover, it would be unfortunate to allow this easy device to supplant the need of inventiveness on the part of the teacher. It is, after all, only one of those good formal processes against the usurpations of which teachers must be on their guard.

Transcription.

Some of the best methods in teaching are among the old methods. Dictation is one of them. It trains the ear, connects the oral with the written language, brings the pupil gradually to the power of writing automatically the word that is in the mind, and has the advantage of being easily comparable with the correct model. If the material for dictation is taken from books in the pupils' possession, the self-criticism of the pupils can be made most helpful.

Dictation.

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[1] *Language and Linguistic Method*, p. 56.

Probably the most common form of composition in our schools is the writing of "reproductions" and paraphrases. By the former is meant giving a somewhat condensed report or transcript of a selection either of prose or poetry. As a means of acquainting pupils with good literature, of affording something interesting to tell, and of training in getting at the essentials of a passage, it is excellent. Moreover, if the material is simple, it serves in some degree also as a model for the pupils' own efforts at original composition. The degree of fulness with which the passage should be reproduced will, of course, vary with the circumstances. In general, the aim should be to have the pupils' work full enough to be interesting to their classmates. In the upper grammar grades a useful form of exercise is the making of brief abstracts of paragraphs, such as are the headings of newspaper articles.

Reproductions.

Paraphrases have been a much abused school exercise. They have served to fill many an hour for helpless teachers, to disgust pupils with many a beautiful piece of literature, and to provoke lively invective from many a school reformer. Says one of these, "A more detestable exercise I do not know. It is a vile use of pen and ink." Undoubtedly it often is. To take a thing of beauty, and to degrade it into a muddle-headed and absurd form, does seem a kind of sacrilege which it is hard to defend. Certainly the claim that paraphrasing is a means of cultivating a good style seems ridiculous. As an exercise in composition, it might well be abandoned. But as a means of bringing a pupil to see that he does not fully understand the meaning of a passage, or to realize the fulness of meaning packed into small compass, and therefore as an occasional adjunct to the teaching of literature, paraphrasing may serve a good purpose. Besides, do not critics — and good ones, too — use it now and then to make clear an obscure passage?

Paraphrases.

One of the first essentials to both clear thinking and clear expression is a sense of the form of the sentence. It is a unit

of thought as well as a form of thought.[1] A sense of the form of the sentence has, of course, been emerging from the broken speech of infancy; and the same inductive processes will continue to make it clearer in the primary grades. Helped by the teacher, with such questions as "What did you say about this thing?" or "What was it that you said about this?" the conception will grow more rapidly. By the third year in school, children can be taught definitely that the sentence has two parts, subject and predicate. Later, by the fifth year, at least, they can learn to separate these parts from one another in complete sentences, and to see that a compound sentence has two or more of each of these parts, though it would probably not be worth while to introduce the names *complex* and *compound*. The immediate purpose of this instruction is not grammar, though it prepares the way for grammar as a later study, but composition, — composition viewed as above, as clear thinking and clear expression. The knowledge of the structure of the sentence is almost a necessary condition to such critical questioning of thought and expression as the teacher must do in any adequate treatment of written work. The clearing up of obscure relationships, the testing of hazy conceptions, can be facilitated by such means. Moreover, the rhythm which is an element of good writing and to which the ears of children may be made sensitive, is better appreciated when they have a clear conception of the sentence.

Sentence Structure.

Drill in the sentence, oral and written, should be a regular part of the language work. Imperfect sentences written by the children should be made better by the class. Ideas should be stated and restated, until they are in good form. Sentences incomplete in predicate or subject should be filled out, loose sentences made compact, etc. An admirable form of exercise is suggested in a certain text-book on composition.[2]

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[1] It has, however, been argued, especially by Dr. E. H. Lewis, that the paragraph is the unit of thought. This seems to apply rather to the educated mind than to that of the child.

[2] Goyen's *Principles of English Composition*, New York 1894.

A clear sentence, preferably from books in the possession of the pupils, is arranged in parts under heads as follows, to be cast into good form by the pupils.

Subject.	*Predicate.*	*Object.*	*Subject Modifiers.*	*Predicate Modifiers.*
squadron	were riding		A stately of snowy geese convoying whole fleets of ducks	in an adjoining pond

Other valuable exercises are practice in saying things in different ways: substitution of words, changing of phrases into clauses and the reverse, statement of contrary ideas, etc. These and many other excellent devices, for which the present work lacks space, may be found in the various text-books for teaching composition.

Most of the school rhetorics of a generation ago laid stress mainly upon the word and the sentence. But the importance of the paragraph as a basis of composition work seems now fully established. It is the unit of thought in all that continuous thinking towards which the school is working. Whether the pupil attempt to grasp the thought of a story or of an explanation given by some one else, or to order his own thoughts into fit form for expression, his mind must proceed from paragraph to paragraph. When he wishes to make a single point clear, in any degree of fulness, he must write a paragraph. The appreciation of the paragraph, therefore, implies at once some power of discrimination and some sense of unity.

Paragraph Structure.

Obviously, it cannot be taught in the primary grades. The very conception of it implies the ability to think of a unit of discourse larger than the sentence, of an integral part of the whole composition. When — and only when — the pupil has arrived at the power of giving a connected account long enough

to be designated as a "whole composition," and is able to think of that account as made up of successive parts, he can begin to realize what the term "paragraph" means. The beginnings of this study may be made, in very simple form, in the third or fourth grade. The pupil may be telling a story of some experience he has had. This story he can think of as made up of beginning, middle, and end: the circumstances, the principal event, and the consequences. His attention can be called to the similar building and paragraphing of some printed story. The way to the subject thus opened, the discrimination of the parts that compose a piece of writing and the noting of the essential elements in each of these parts should become a frequent exercise not only in the English lessons but in other school subjects. In his own writing he can learn to reject or postpone ideas for the sake of the paragraph unity.

In this work constant references to good models are indispensable. To make the conception clear and firm is a work of time, — a work, indeed, which the school is hardly able to complete, for perfect paragraphing is an achievement for the thoroughly trained mind. None the less, it is to be worked for steadily in the elementary school. In this, as in all other forms of training, the school must seek and be contented with only approximations.

As a form of composition for school use, the single paragraph has the special advantage of being short enough to be grasped easily, and long enough to comprise an adequate statement of an idea; short enough, too, to be read easily by the overworked teacher, and long enough to indicate the pupil's mental processes. It is better to write often and well than seldom and carelessly. It is better to attempt what one can grasp and "think through" than to fall into devious wanderings in the longer and more ambitious task.

Making Outlines.

The discussion of paragraphs brings us naturally to the consideration of the plan of the whole composition. Should children have a plan? It has been objected that a plan makes the work stiff and mechanical, that it destroys interest and cripples imagination. The objection

seems largely sentimental. It seems to assume that writing and speaking are emotional rather than intellectual processes, or that order and form hamper rather than facilitate the action of the mind. Now speech, though prompted by emotion, is essentially an intellectual act; and teaching must bring order into intellectual activities. Moreover, that the following of a plan does not hamper intellectual activity is demonstrated by the daily experience of good teachers; on the contrary, it gives a certain freedom and confidence to the pupil. Having made his rough outline, he writes what he knows upon the first topic and the second, etc., unhampered by the necessity of constantly considering where he "is going to come out." Outlining the subject to be written is, like paragraph study, not in place in the earliest years. It may begin with the consideration of the paragraph; it is, indeed, in the simpler forms of writing, the same thing, and may be presented in the same way.

Perhaps the most valuable result of such work is the guidance it affords in "working up a subject," that is, either in taking stock of one's ideas or in gathering material. Children are generally helpless in both these respects. Let us assume a case. A topic of some length is assigned for treatment, such as, say, *The Building of the X. Y. Z. Railroad.* Some information on the subject is already in possession of the pupils. Other information is to be sought in the appropriate places. The teacher begins to open up the subject by questions. When was the road built? Where? Why? How long did it take? What were the difficulties? This and similar questions would result in the pupil's gathering a store of information which might be arranged in some such outline as follows: —

Gathering Material.

The Building of the X. Y. Z. Railroad.

I. Dates of beginning and completion.

II. Reasons for building the railroad.

1. Productiveness and populousness of the country through which it runs.

2. Absence of other adequate means of transport, or excessive charges of existing roads.

3. Terminals opening up distant markets by connecting with other roads or with seaports.

III. Obstacles to be overcome.

1. Legislative: due to the prejudices or lack of foresight on the part of natives, or to influences brought to bear by rival roads.

2. Financial: scarcity of capital; lack of confidence in projectors.

3. Natural: need of tunnelling, bridging, etc.

4. These obstacles overcome by certain means.

IV. Construction.

1. Time.

2. Cost.

3. Influx of labourers, etc.

V. Results.

1. Stimulus to industry.

2. Increase of population.

3. Decrease of provincialism, etc.

Such an outline is, perhaps, fuller and more elaborate than is desirable. It is given here, not as a model, but merely to indicate the possibilities of any outline as a guide in gathering and ordering ideas, and therefore of training in thinking.

Preparing for Writing.

We now pass to the more general discussion of the preparation for the composition. Such preliminary work as will guide the student in bringing to the surface of his consciousness ideas which he already has, in gathering new ideas, and in arranging his material, is half the work of teaching composition. A barren mind makes good writing impossible. Either there will be no writing, or the meaningless tautology which only stultifies and stupefies the writer. To avoid this condition, the ingenuity and alertness of the teacher's mind must be called into play. He must be able, first, to choose a subject that has possibilities; second, to turn it

over in various lights, to place it in relation to other things, until the class has been brought to the point of finding it rich in material, and, finally, to stimulate that lively oral discussion of it which adds both to interest and clearness. One phase of such preparatory work has been presented in the preceding paragraphs upon the making of outlines.

Gathering and Arranging Material.

Another phase is the presentation of good models. Much has been said about the use of good models. Some masters of style have given direct testimony and advice as to their value. Johnson's famous admonition to give one's days and nights to Addison, if one would acquire certain specific graces of style; Franklin's testimony as to how he constantly imitated Addison in order to learn to write well; and Stevenson's charming confession of "playing the sedulous ape" to various writers, are all well known.[1] But the distinction must be drawn between the kind of imitation thus recommended, and the kind appropriate for the average child in the elementary schools. These were men, or boys, of extraordinary gifts, possessing a power of analysis, an amount of enthusiasm, and a degree of sensitiveness not common. Their aim, moreover, was literary. Now the aim of school instruction cannot be to make authors. It must be content to teach boys and girls to write with a fair degree of clearness and propriety. The imitation of the fine graces of style is inexpedient and impossible; it would only breed "fine writing," that is, fantastic and absurd writing.

Use of Models.

There is, however, a use for good models. They may be the best work of the members of the class, or the work of the teacher, or selections from good literature. They will serve: (1) To let the pupil see the sort of thing he has to do already done, and so get a general notion of what it is like, and the feeling that it can be done. (2) To give him certain general

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[1] See Johnson's essay on Addison, in his *Lives of the Poets*, Franklin's *Autobiography*, and Stevenson's essay, "A College Magazine," in *Memories and Portraits*.

notions as to the order of procedure, — what to put first, etc. (3) To increase his vocabulary in the way that his vocabulary is naturally growing, that is, by contact with better and fuller speech than his own, and (4) To add to his stock of ideas. It should be noted here that the effects of good models are very different in the earlier and later stages of elementary instruction. At first there is the merest unconscious imitation; later, analysis of the content and form of literature, leading occasionally to conscious imitation. But such deliberate imitations will be of infrequent occurrence and slight value, compared with the influences of the less studied sort in all the years of the elementary school.

Correlation of Studies.

One of the topics magnified by much discussion in educational conferences is "correlation of studies." Out of the heterogeneous materials making up an ordinary school curriculum, it has seemed desirable to build some coherent, unified whole. Hence the attempts to bring the subjects of the course into right relations with each other, partly by placing them in certain parallel or consecutive places, partly by emphasizing certain phases of them as of value in this or that subject. English, being used in all the studies, has naturally been expected to supply a common bond among them.

The predilections of the teacher or superintendent generally determine whether English is to be regarded as the handmaiden of all the other subjects, or the queen to whom they all bring tribute. So long as the relationship results in sound instruction all along the line, it makes but little difference which point of view is adopted. It is enough that the teacher know and realize that the teaching of science and good, clear orderly English side by side is a desirable thing. To object because either the English or the science is regarded as of secondary value is like looking for grievances. As has been already pointed out, the fundamental aim should be the training of the mind in gaining clear ideas and expressing them clearly. Other subjects of the course will afford much good material for teaching composition. Lessons in history, science, manual

training, will not only furnish the necessary ideas, but will also present the order in which those ideas are to be arranged; that is, will supply both substance and form. Such use of material will also secure economy of time and energy. It is better for the history lesson that it should be gathered together and written in the orderly form of a good composition, and better for the composition lesson that it should be upon material already carefully worked over.

Paradoxically enough, the most difficult of these relationships to define and employ in its full measure of value is that which at first seems easiest and most natural; namely, the relationship between literature and composition. **Literature and Composition.** In the very excellence of the literary model lies the source of the difficulty. The indifferent model written by the teacher or by the pupils is easy to imitate; but the simplest, the clearest, — that is, the best, — of literary models are the despair precisely of those who can really appreciate them. The trouble lies in part in the nature of the challenge offered. Similar material may be told, indeed, in a somewhat similar manner; but the peculiar something which makes the one performance literature, and the imitations mere writing, eludes the grasp. We are reduced, therefore, to three obvious things in our attempt to correlate literature with composition: (1) To find in it our material for composition, as in the ordinary reproduction of a story; (2) to follow the general plan presented by the model;[1] (3) to cultivate, by frequent and intimate contact with the best literature, a sense of the beauty of the form, which, in reason and justice, we can expect pupils to imitate only at a distance. That is to say, we are in no different case with respect to the first two of these things than when we deal with the material chosen from the text-books in history and science. With respect to the third thing, we have a task analogous to the inculcation of fine manners and good morals. We present the good models for imitation, we point

[1] See, for example, the *order* of the description in the opening scenes of Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*.

out and iterate and enforce principles, but the subtle graces of character and bearing which are the desired result may or may not come. Much, very much, in either case depends upon the fineness of fibre of the teacher and the pupil.

To surrender the whole problem, however, because of its subtlety and its difficulty would be mere cowardice. The views just expressed are to be regarded as a recognition of its general difficulty and its frequent insolubility. The road to its solution can at least be pointed out, and the achievement be left — where, after all presentations of educational principles, it must always be left — for the wisdom, taste, and industry of the individual teacher. Several definite things may be done to bring the pupil towards this imitation of the best writing: (1) He may be led to saturate himself with it, by learning more and yet more of it. What he commits to memory, both ideas and diction, becomes part of his mental equipment. Every one knows how a knowledge of the English Bible has given dignity and weight to the speech even of the uneducated. (2) The pupil may be led to see the force of precise and simple diction. Such discrimination gives definiteness to his ideas and more clearness to his speech. A conscience for right speaking may and should be cultivated. (3) If the teacher admires the good things in language, and has the gift of showing such admiration in a genuine and temperate manner, the admiration is likely to be felt by the pupils. To remember good writing, to recognize its simplicity and precision, and to catch an admiration for it may not be enough to make good writers; but they will make poor writers better writers.

Suggestions as to Method.

But can this be done with all pupils? Will they all see the beauty that we wish them to see? Probably not. It has become safe to say, without fear of being called brutal, that some children seem hopelessly dull, blind to beauty and to nice discriminations: that is, incapable of being educated. For these, the teacher must only do her best, provided she does not neglect the others.

In addition to the suggestions made in the foregoing paragraphs we must notice briefly the discussions in the schoolroom of books read by the class, leaving the fuller treatment of the topic for the section on the study of literature. These discussions may include (1) the statement of the story or ideas gleaned from the reading, (2) the expression of judgments upon these stories and ideas. Both are of the highest value. To repeat the author's ideas is to make them more thoroughly our own, and to adopt in some measure his vocabulary. To form and express judgments, even though they be crude, is to use one's mental stores in the way that makes them of most value: classifying ideas, gaining new ones by inference, and finding them more vivid as they issue in language.

Discussion of Literature Read.

In a former chapter it has been argued that English is to be regarded as one subject, of which literature, composition, and language study are only the various aspects. Against this treatment of the subject there are certain arguments: (1) It is more difficult to maintain interest in the reading when digressions are made for the study of words and sentences.[1] (2) Time and energy are saved through the use of a text-book presenting principles well stated and examples well chosen. (3) There is danger that important linguistic facts and principles will be ignored or forgotten if left for incidental consideration in the reading-lessons. It is not easy for the most conscientious teacher to remember all the language work that needs to be taught, — or to judge wisely what should be taught, — while trying to teach well the literature that is read. (4) That the majority of teachers are not yet sufficiently trained either in subject matter or in the technique of their art to attempt such a method.

English one Subject.

In spite of these obvious objections, it seems that the various branches of the study of English should be brought into

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[1] Mr. Chubb, in *The Teaching of English*, goes further in deprecating the use of the reading lesson as an opportunity for language study.

still nearer relationship. The teaching of these subjects only apart from the reading has certain grave objections. (1) It overlooks the importance of training in the habit of observing the forms of words and sentences. Such observation is almost a necessary element in learning language, and is a habit of most educated people. (2) It disregards the value of attention to the niceties of expression, upon which depend exact knowledge and fine appreciation. The isolated study of the meanings of words cannot leave in the pupil's mind so just an idea of their use as the study of their meaning in connected discourse; and the study of sentences has more significance in connection with whole paragraphs. (3) It is, in itself, less interesting. Knowledge unrelated and unapplied, is dead knowledge to the child; while knowledge of a word that helps to explain a sentence is living knowledge.

Arguments for Unification.

In a given reading-lesson, say a poem like Longfellow's *Paul Revere's Ride*, there might be several distinct aims in view. First, undoubtedly, the understanding of the story. After some brief preliminary explanation of the historical background, or of terms and allusions not likely to be understood, the story would be read, and the reading be followed or accompanied by such question or comment as seemed likely to sharpen impressions, point out relationships, or heighten the feelings aroused. Then or later (rules must not be rigid about these things; the tact of a wise teacher is more trustworthy than pedagogical theories) the language might be considered. Lines would be chosen to illustrate the points to be taught. Here the punctuation helps to indicate the meaning; if changed, it would change the meaning thus and so. Here the word conveys such and such impression; such another word, resembling this in meaning, would change the sense to so and so. Here will be noticed the short abrupt expression, leaving something to be supplied; there the inverted order for the sake of emphasis, or, perhaps, of metre or rhyme; and there the allusion or comparison with such and such associations. These and similar matters would naturally be elicited by skil-

ful question and suggestion, inviting the co-operation of the child, rather than pointed out as matters of information by the teacher.

To unify the work in language it will not always be necessary to begin with the reading. The study may begin with the language end of the matter, and find significant illustration in the reading. In either case the important end to be secured is that the pupils shall come to regard the studies in the mother-tongue as different phases of one subject, shall gain in the reading work illustrations of the facts of the language and an increasing power over the language; and in the language study a means of interpreting and appreciating the reading.

Language Text-Books.

It would be well to regard the special text-books on language study as storehouses of facts and principles to be referred to when necessary and of exercises to be used when desirable. With suitable exercises and clear statements of principles accessible, the emphasis could be thrown upon the language as found in the reading-books and as used by class and teacher. Care could be taken that important matters should not be overlooked, and that the language aspect of the work should heighten rather than diminish the interest in the content of the story.

Frequency and Amount of Written Work.

It remains to consider two questions that force themselves upon the attention of every conscientious teacher: How much and how often should pupils write? And, how is the criticism of their work to be made most effective? Several general principles may be offered in answer to the first question: (1) Since writing, like speech and manners, is a habit, there should be at least daily practice in it. Such practice need not always be in set compositions. It may often be in the writing of some part of a school exercise in another subject. It should usually be short, but should be done with care. If the motor activities involved in writing are to be made easy and therefore serviceable, they must not be allowed to grow "rusty." (2) Since the mind, as it grows, becomes able to compass larger masses of material, there should

be a gradual lengthening of the average exercises from the lower to the higher grades.[1] (3) Though the paragraph is the unit of discourse best adapted to the purposes of teaching composition, there should occasionally be longer compositions, — from three to five hundred words, say, — in order that the pupil may gain the power of handling larger masses of material. Such exercises might occur once in two weeks. These considerations will have application in various ways according to the conditions under which the teacher works. If the class is twice as large as it ought to be, the teacher cannot be expected to keep the work up to an ideal standard.

Criticism of Compositions.

The second question, How shall written work be criticised? is one of the most important in the whole problem of teaching English. Upon the value of the criticism success in teaching composition finally depends. Two results must be sought: economy of the teacher's time and energy, and effectiveness in the criticism made. Upon success in the latter aim depends, in part, the securing of the former. How then shall the criticism be made effective? The aim of the work is to increase the pupil's knowledge of the subject, and to raise his standard of judgment; in brief, to make him self-critical. The less necessary to him the teacher becomes, the better is the teaching. Hence the importance (1) of determining the ordinary errors and difficulties first to be attacked. Selecting these first points, make them the subject of class instruction, inviting criticism and discussion from the class as a whole. To go too fast is to discourage and confuse the pupils. (2) Present models of the thing well done; make sure that the class is attentive. Require the doing of it in the right way, that it may become part of the motor activities. (3) Give help on the new difficulties, but hold the pupil responsible for things

Effectiveness.

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[1] This principle applies equally to the oral composition, *i. e.*, the recitation. There should be topical recitations in which the pupil is called upon to discuss a subject without the prodding of the teacher's question.

that he ought to know. (4) Refuse to accept work that is below the standard which the pupil ought, by proper care, to be able to reach. Discriminate carefully between inability and slovenliness. Treat the latter as a grave fault. (5) Require the pupil to make corrections called for: in case of gross carelessness have the paper rewritten entire. (6) Assist him, by searching questions, to clear thinking. Obscure writing is often due to the inability to think the subject out clearly. Have the class participate in such discussions. (7) Note individual difficulties; treat these as far as possible in brief personal interviews. (8) Be as keen to commend good work as to reprove bad. Read specimens of good work to the class. (9) Let the criticism be constructive rather than destructive. Establish friendly and helpful relations with the class. To fail to do this is to cripple the work hopelessly. Writing is a very personal thing; and right and kindly feeling between teacher and pupil is essential to the freedom and confidence that are necessary conditions to good expression. (10) Above all, keep a just balance between the critical and productive faculties of the child. To exaggerate the former is to inhibit his activity; to over-stimulate the latter, is to cultivate carelessness. But if either must be in advance of the other, let it by all means be the latter. Carelessness may be corrected; a rank and luxurious growth may be pruned: but barrenness is a hopeless condition.

So much for the criticism from the point of view of the pupil's welfare. How shall the teacher economize time and energy so as to do his duty, and yet escape the sanitarium or the insane asylum? Some of the suggestions here offered are, as will be observed, duplications of what has been said above. (1) Attack a few difficulties at a time, and let those be typical: concentrate the attention upon things that may be learned until they are learned. Under even the best conditions these things will often be forgotten. But reduce the repetition of instruction to a minimum. (2) Use symbols in red ink or blue pencil along the margin, calling attention to errors which the pupil can correct. (3) Have the

Economy.

corrections made by the pupil, then read the compositions again. The second reading is easy, and is the only means of insuring the performance of the work. The original work of correcting is generally wasted, unless made completely effective by the second revision. (4) Make the criticism of important matters a co-operative class lesson. (5) Reject all slovenly work. (6) Do not attempt to read all papers to the sacrifice of a clear head and steady nerves. Both teacher and class are losers under such conditions. Select, rather, a group of papers from the lot, and make these the subject of the criticism with the class. The teacher's obligations are serious; but they do not extend to martyrdom for rich cities that consider education cheap. (7) Aim to stimulate the interest of the children, and to promote as rapidly as possible their own powers of independent self-criticism. (8) Reserve time and energy enough to keep alive mentally by the reading that both instructs and relaxes. Freshness of mind is essential. Critical work involves difficult constructive processes. It means the ability to realize the possibilities of the subject upon which the pupil has written, to take into account his powers, and by considering these two things, to decide where he has reached the proper level and where fallen short. It means reading not merely for the spelling and the grammar — such criticism is unworthy of the name — but for the ideas. How then can it be done by a starved and jaded mind?

VI. English Grammar in the Elementary Schools

The general subject of the teaching of English grammar is somewhat fully discussed later in this volume.[1] The purpose of the present section is to set forth some of the principles and methods that apply more specifically to the treatment of the subject in the upper grades of the elementary school.

[1] See Chapter III.

As is well known, there was for many years a reaction against the study of English grammar.[1] This reaction seems to have been the result of several causes: (1) The instruction was begun too early, and was therefore both meaningless and over-difficult; (2) The treatment was made mechanical to the point of degenerating into mere rote-work; (3) There was a growing recognition that much of the subject was not in reality English grammar at all, but Latin grammar badly fitted to the English;[2] (4) The claim commonly made for the study, that it led to the correct use of English, was entirely contradicted by facts, since many good students of grammar used bad English, and many who knew no grammar used good English.

Reaction against Formal Grammar.

Now, every one of these grave objections has been fully sustained. And yet the subject of English grammar holds a place in the schools, defended both by the practical teacher and by the theorist upon education. The ground of the teacher's faith lies in his actual knowledge of the value of grammar (1) as a general means of training in clear thinking, (2) as an assistance in understanding language and in clear expression, and (3) as a means of correction of some of the gross errors of speech. The theoretical defences are along the same lines. Says Professor Laurie:[3] "By the analysis of language, then, you introduce the young intellect to the unconscious analysis of its own thinking in its whole range. While engaged in this exercise, the abstract powers are so involved in a concrete that is familiar to all that the formal discipline is not made obtrusive and distasteful. A boy who is intelligently analyzing language is analyzing the processes of thought, and is a logician without knowing it. And this is the reason why the study of language in its formal aspects has always been regarded as the best preparation for the

Its Justification.

[1] See, for example, Matthew Arnold's *Reports on Elementary Schools* for 1861, New York, 1889.

[2] See Barbour's *The Teaching of English Grammar*, p. 4, and Goold Brown's *Grammar of Grammars*, second d., p. 130.

[3] *Language and Linguistic Method*, Lecture I.

logician and philosopher, and, according to Quintilian, of the orator also. Hence, too, it is the best preparation for the study of all or any of the sciences."[1] "Grammar, as the logic of common speech, is a system of abstractions."[1] "It is apparent from the nature of an examination of a sentence of English, with a view to the thorough understanding of it, . . . that the pupil who fully comprehends it, has already analyzed words and clauses in relation to *thought*, and performed an important analytico-synthetic exercise."[2] A similar defence of the study of grammar is offered in the well-known and able *Report of the Committee of Fifteen*, and has been made in many other places.[3] As a matter of fact, then, the belief in the value of grammar is not seriously shaken. What has been overthrown is only the mistaken notions as to the nature of the subject, and of the value to be derived from the study of it. The net result of modern thought upon its value may be thus summed up: (1) It is a training in thought; (2) it is of value in interpreting sentences and in clear expression; (3) it is a guide in correct expression and in certain matters of usage; (4) it is an assistance in acquiring foreign languages. The most important of these functions is undoubtedly the first.

Suggestions for Teaching Grammar.

The task of teaching grammar to young pupils is not easy. Its abstract nature repels, and its distinctions are sometimes difficult. There are certain problems which arise in the work for the solution of which the following suggestions are offered: —

When to Begin.

1. It is well to postpone the systematic treatment of formal grammar until the seventh year in school. It has been taught earlier, of course; but the immaturity of the pupil, not yet arrived at the stage of development where the powers of abstraction are active, makes the work arduous

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[1] *Language and Linguistic Method*, Lecture VI.

[2] *Ibid.*, Lecture VII.

[3] See Barbour's *The Teaching of English Grammar*, pp. 22–24, for a list of such citations.

and distasteful, if not futile: what seems to be learned may not really be known at all except as a series of words. Moreover, it has been found perfectly possible to give all the grammar needed in two years, or even in one year, before the pupil enters the high school.

2. It is very desirable that some of the elementary conceptions of grammar be taught early in the course, beginning not later than the fourth year, and gradually increasing the stock of grammatical knowledge until the subject is taken up as a systematic study. Beginning with the simple distinction between subject and predicate, make this clear by numerous examples. Then teach nouns and pronouns as names of things and persons; then verbs, as the words that are necessary to a *statement*, or assertion. These must be made clear by numerous examples, by frequent repetition. Then, in similar manner, develop the ideas of adjective and adverb, — that is, of modifiers of noun (or pronoun) and verb, respectively, — making the conception include not only the individual word, but the groups of words that have these functions. Make the work real and vital by keeping it in the most intimate connection with the general study of language; use it in composition and in the interpretation of things read and studied. If this body of knowledge be acquired and made familiar through use by the end of the sixth year, the study of formal grammar may be taken up in the seventh year without fear of too great difficulty, and, it is to be hoped, with sufficient interest on the part of the pupil.

Preliminary Stages.

3. From the first consideration of the parts of speech, throw the emphasis upon *function* as determining the class to which the words belong. To say that such and such a word is a noun used as a verb, or an adjective used as a noun, is a needless confusion of terms and ideas. In English, the word is what its use in the particular context makes it. Only by keeping this in mind can we get the desired attention upon the logical aspect of grammar.

Emphasis upon Function.

4. The work must be made concrete. Abstract conceptions are meaningless unless linked with the power to render them concrete. Failure in this makes vagueness, parrot-like iteration, and all the faults of merely formal instruction from which modern education is still freeing itself. Keep principles and examples close together. Start by preference with the example, and make it clear that the rule or the definition is only the formula, the description, and not the real thing. It is easier, for instance, to make clear the essential nature of prepositions and conjunctions by lists of them *in use* than by definitions. Indeed, a facility in rule and definition should be a warning to the teacher to test the reality of the pupil's knowledge.

Concreteness.

5. There must be frequent repetition. Abstract ideas easily evaporate unless they are made part of the very stuff of the mind; and they become so incorporated not merely by explanation and example, but by long familiarity and frequent application. An illustration familiar to teachers of mathematics is the notion of general quantity as represented by letters in algebra: it usually comes to be accepted as an ordinary and rational conception only after it is familiar; until that stage is reached, explanation, though it may allay doubts and win assent, is inadequate to make the conception real.

Repetition.

6. The order of procedure indicated above, that is, from the sentence to the word, seems to be easiest for elementary pupils, though unquestionably they may be taught successfully by the opposite order. The following sequence of topics, or its near equivalent, is finding its way into text-books and into many schools: —

Order of Treatment.

A. *Structure of the Sentence*

I. A general analysis of the simple sentence into subject and predicate.

II. Adjective modifiers: words, or groups of words.

III. Adverbial modifiers: words, or groups of words.

B. *Parts of Speech*

I. Nouns, pronouns, adjectives (including articles).
II. Verbs, adverbs.
III. Conjunctions, prepositions, interjections.

C. *Parsing*

I. Numbers, genders, and cases of nouns and pronouns; inflections; kinds of nouns.
II. Comparison of adjectives and adverbs; inflections; kinds of each.
III. Verbs: voice, mood; inflections; verb phrases; kinds of verbs; participles.
IV. Prepositions, conjunctions, interjections; their relationships.

D. *Analysis*

I. Phrases and clauses: kinds and uses.
II. Analysis of sentences: complex and compound.

Now, it is obvious that this order of procedure presents difficulties. So do all orders of procedure known to teachers of grammar. That which is open to least *logical* objection is the old-fashioned order, from words to sentences. But the logical order of a subject is by no means always the natural or easy order of acquisition. And in spite of its apparent lack of system, an order in general like the above is more easily followed by the mind of the child.

7. The subjects of diagrams and parsing are fully discussed elsewhere.[1] The general principles there laid down seem to apply with equal force in the present chapter. It should be noted, especially, that in the elementary school, as in the high school, the analysis of the sentence — that is, the analysis of thought — is the most valuable exercise in connection with the study of grammar.

Parsing and Diagrams.

[1] See Chapter III.

8. A more difficult question to determine than either the order of procedure or the importance of parsing and analysis is, What and how much grammar should there be in the elementary school? The high school teacher wants the subject finished in the elementary school, so that he may have no further annoyance from it. But this is hardly possible, inasmuch as some of the distinctions of grammar cannot be taught with advantage until the pupil is older and has learned some of the grammar of other languages. Moreover, the teacher of English in the high school who attempts to present English as "one subject" can hardly ignore formal grammar. The teachers of Latin and German, also, would have the subject completed before the high school, partly that they may build upon certain definite conceptions that they have a right to expect, and partly that they may escape the teaching of certain grammatical facts which it is their business to teach. Unfortunately, too, their own unfamiliarity with modern English grammar often leads them to expect of the pupil a kind of grammar which is not English, but Latin. The body of grammatical facts appropriate to the elementary school is rather limited. It might be summed up about as follows: —

How much Grammar?

I. A knowledge of the sentence sufficient to analyze and parse it down to its single words, except, of course, in the case of phrases that are so idiomatic that they render analysis absurd.

II. An understanding of case and a knowledge of case relationships including not only the nominative, genitive, and objective (or accusative), but also the dative and the vocative.

III. An acquaintance with the verb in its various aspects of voice, mood, tense; transitive and intransitive participles and their uses.

IV. A knowledge of all the common inflections as they appear in nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs.

V. The various kinds of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions.

VI. The simple rules of syntax, particularly those whose violation is common in oral speech.

VII. The power to distinguish between relationships where the form may be the same but the meaning twofold, as in phrases like "the love of God."

VIII. A brief general history of the language, as to its origin; some of the historical facts that throw light on present forms, like the genitive and dative cases, the verb phrases, etc.

9. The choice of a text-book is an important matter. Its order of presentation of the subject is not all-important; for that need not be followed rigidly. But clearness of statement, aptness, interest, and sufficiency of examples are points of great consequence. The comments of Professor Sweet, though made with reference to the study of a foreign language,[1] are also applicable here: "A good example must fulfil two conditions: (1) It must illustrate and confirm the rule unambiguously . . . (2) The example must be intelligible as it stands, without further context." The examples ought, further, to be taken from good literature, either from modern writers, or, if from older writers, from among those sentences whose "construction has been imitated by modern writers."[2] **Choice of Text-books.**

10. The correction of false syntax as a grammatical exercise has been vigorously assailed. Certainly it has sometimes been far from justifiable. But we believe such exercises may have their uses. When the right form is once learned, occasional practice in setting the wrong right has the advantage of sharpening the critical faculties and deepening the memory of the right forms. Such errors as are used for the purpose should, however, not be arbitrary inventions of the teacher or author; they should be errors **False Syntax.**

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[1] Sweet's *Practical Study of Languages*, pp. 131 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 134.

which are actually made in the oral or written speech of the class, or errors to which they are exposed by their environment.

11. Since the point of view in modern English grammar as presented by English philologists is radically different from that given in the old-fashioned grammar, and in many grammars still in use in the schools, it is the duty of every teacher of grammar to make himself acquainted with the modern point of view.

VII. Spelling

Difficulty.

So long as English remains a badly spelled language, — that is, a language whose sounds are imperfectly and irregularly represented by its orthography, — so long will the task of learning to spell remain severe. Spelling was at one time, if not a matter of individual taste, at least a matter in which individual variations from an imperfectly established standard were lightly judged. With the wider diffusion of common instruction, and the prevalence of the ideal of "correctness" in English, correct spelling came to be a test of education, and with most people is so at the present day. When the school subjects were few, to learn to spell was a difficult task to which were devoted many hours of conning and reciting; now that the curriculum contains so much that economy of time must be sought, English spelling has become a serious burden.

Suggested Remedies.

Remedial measures have of course been suggested. The spelling reformers have offered changes more or less radical and more or less rational. These have won but slight favour. The new forms *look* so strange; our habits and our tastes are bound up with the old forms. And so, though most of us are in theory in favour of reform, the weight of custom and of vested interests has made the progress of reform very slow. We are beginning to write *program* without the final *me*, and to adopt a number of similar minor changes; but it is likely to be long before any thorough change is effected.

The educationists have, of course, offered their theories. Time spent in spelling-drill is wasted, they have said. Pupils who learn to read by the "word method" or the "sentence method" will learn to spell because they will see how the words look. This was a beautiful theory. But its failure in practice was so complete and final that it brought discredit even upon many of the best principles in the "new education."

The present situation, then, is something like this: English spelling is irrational and difficult, and likely to remain so for all the generations in sight; there is a widespread and settled tendency to judge of a man's intellectual capacity by his ability to spell; the elementary curriculum is so crowded that time is precious; and we have discovered no royal road to spelling. Some things have, however, been discovered, that point out the path of present effort. **The Present Situation.**

1. Special drill seems necessary. More than an hour and a half per week of drill seems not to be attended with a commensurate increase in results. Less than this seems insufficient to produce "good spellers."[1]

2. There is a decided difference in native aptitudes for the work. To some it is comparatively easy, to others a well-nigh hopeless task. Moreover, it has been discovered that the ability to spell seems to "run in families," that is, to be hereditary.[2]

3. Some people spell "by ear," but most of them by the eye; that is, they have a memory of the word as it appears on the printed page. To these forms of memory must be added

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[1] See J. M. Rice, "The Futility of the Spelling Grind," FORUM, XXIII. 163 ff. (April, 1897) and 409 ff. (June, 1897).

[2] This has been established in some studies recently conducted under the direction of Professor E. L. Thorndike of Teachers College. The same conclusions were arrived at independently by Professor F. N. Scott, and were presented by him before the Massachusetts Association of Teachers of English in November, 1901. See the NEW YORK EVENING POST, November 16, 1901, p. 12.

the motor memories whereby the hand automatically writes the word that is in the mind.

Now it is obvious that it is the ability, not to spell the word orally, but to write it, that is desired. The spelling-lessons should, therefore, be mainly written. They should occasionally have the reinforcement of oral lessons, partly for the benefit of those whose auditory memories are stronger, partly for the sake of the emulation thus easily aroused,[1] and partly for the better appreciation of the word as an audible thing. Many words are misspelled because they are never correctly heard. The two main objects for which to strive are, however, a clear picture of the word as it looks on the page, and a readiness in transcribing this visual image with the pen. For this purpose the teacher will lay stress upon the memory of the appearance of the word; will call for its reproduction orally, and in writing after it has been seen on the page or the blackboard; will urge the pupils consciously to get and hold the image of the word; and will be careful that new words are not merely heard but also seen in writing or in print.

General Suggestions.

Rules in spelling are good things if well used. The rule is not the point from which to start. But when a number of instances under the rule are known, the rule serves to hold the principle in mind: such are the rules for the *ei* and *ie* combination, for the doubling of the final consonant when a suffix is added, and the like.[2]

The Use of Rules.

In a language whose orthography has so little regularity, whatever of uniformity there is should be seized upon and turned to account: hence the value of learning lists of words of analogous form, like those ending in *tion*, *sion*, *cious*, etc. These are more easily remembered if recalled as belonging to a certain group. Finally, most pupils need to realize that they are expected to learn to spell fairly well, and that to do

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[1] The author wishes to put himself on record as a believer in an occasional "spelling-match" of the antique sort.

[2] See the Introductions to the dictionaries for lists of such rules.

this they must work. The teacher can do little to help them: if they are not to carry through life a habit of bad spelling as a badge of illiteracy, they must save themselves by a lively conscience, and a confirmed habit of being concerned about words.

VIII. Literature in the Elementary Schools

Since the days when, a generation ago, the literature introduced in the common schools was generally limited to the series of school readers, and the selections learned for the Friday afternoon "declamation" exercises, the theory of instruction in literature has been discussed from almost every conceivable point of view. As a revelation of beauty, as a source of pleasure, as a means of introduction to the past, as a revelation to himself of the personality of the pupil,[1] as a study of life, as systematic discipline, or as a cultivation of the imagination — from these and other points of view the study of literature in the elementary schools has been amply advocated. To enter at this date upon any justification of its place seems useless. Literature is in the schools by universal consent, and is as likely to stay there as any other subject. The accepted view of the elementary school as the introduction to the environment of the pupils insures the permanence of literature in the curriculum. For the sake, however, of a proper basis in discussing the treatment of the subject, it is needful to formulate our judgments upon its educational worth, its relation to other subjects of the school curriculum, and the best methods of teaching it.

Literature as a School Subject: Its Permanence.

By literature, we mean not the made-to-order reading matter furnishing graduated series of words for beginners, nor the moral lessons whose sole excuse is their doubtful effect in securing right conduct, nor the "information" lessons that aim to unify the course of study. We mean rather that select body of prose and poetry which the world of cultivated men and women, untroubled by educational

The Test of Good Literature.

[1] See Corson's *Aims of Literary Study*, pp. 7–23.

theories, is willing to call literature. Its range is from Mother Goose to Plato; but wherever it may lie between these limits, to be literature it must have also another stamp of approval than that of the schoolmaster. To define it is the business of criticism and æsthetics; to be at home in it is the teacher's duty.

Its Educational Importance Historically.

For thousands of years letters have been regarded as the chief — sometimes as the only — source of true culture. Greek and Roman education proceeded largely upon this assumption.[1] Chinese education still recognizes little else.[2] Mediæval literature is full of the same idea. The Renaissance, bringing together the literary achievements of the elder world and the best contemporary thought and feeling, expressed its intellectual life best in literature; and to be "lettered" was the only way to be educated. The study of humanity through literature was the only true "humanism." How the Renaissance degenerated into the formal classicism of the early eighteenth century, how this formalism was broken down by another intellectual and spiritual revival of western Europe, until literature came again to fuller expression of the human spirit, are matters of familiar history. Through it all, however, it was still the literary ideal, in whatever form, that dominated education.[3] By the middle of the nineteenth century the educational fastnesses were rudely assailed from an unexpected quarter. The great achievements of physical science demanded recognition. They had established new facts, not only regarding nature but regarding man, which altered the whole view of life. They had proved the validity of scientific method not only as an *organon* of knowledge but as a means of

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[1] See Monroe's *Source Book of the History of Education*, New York, 1901.

[2] See A. H. Smith's *Village Life in China*, pp. 110 ff., New York, 1900.

[3] That comparatively little of this found its way meanwhile into the elementary schools is evidence only of the failure to realize the possibilities of early instruction.

discipline. And then followed the great educational controversy of the sciences versus letters.[1] The scientists won their case, except in their claim that science satisfied *all* the requirements of a liberal education.[2] The upshot of the controversy is that both literature and physical science reveal to us phases of our environment; both train the mind by furnishing material for the apprehension and the judgment; both develop the imagination and discipline the reasoning faculties. Science, however, makes the larger appeal to the reason, and literature to the emotions. Careful thinkers in both fields have gone further and pointed out that the mental processes involved in literature and science are the same: a generalization and classification of experiences, in the one case expressing the results in concrete representation of the type, in the other stating them abstractly in the law or the formula.[3] Still another important subject has, within our own generation, entered the schools in the manual arts, which train not only the perceptions and the judgment, but the muscles and the will, and, like science and literature, help to make the pupil acquainted with his environment. When to these branches of human knowledge we add history, whose educational value is in most essential points identical with that of literature, we have in broad outlines the scope of elementary instruction.

From the foregoing survey it is evident that while the educational importance of literature as a subject of elementary instruction is far better recognized than formerly, it has no such pre-eminence as it once held in college and university instruction. Nor is it the purpose of the present discussion to claim for the subject any such pre-eminence, but rather to show what its educational value really is, and how this value may be realized.

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[1] See Huxley's *Science and Education*, New York, 1894, for a strong and interesting presentation of the scientific side.

[2] See the excellent essay on "Literature and Science" in Matthew Arnold's *Discourses in America*.

[3] Woodberry's *Heart of Man*, pp. 82–94, New York, 1900, and Karl Pearson's *Grammar of Science*, pp. 34–36, London, 1900.

Literature as a Portrayal of Life.

Literature portrays human life, its activities, its ideas and emotions, and those things about which human interest and emotion cluster.[1] It presents them in forms which are of themselves pleasing. It does not, however, rest with mere portrayal, but presents its pictures and ideas in such manner and such relations as to give them a new interest, a new meaning: it colours them with emotion and interprets their significance. It gives the personal point of view of the author, that is, his memories and the combinations he has made of them, with the resultant inferences and emotions;[2] but, to be literature of the highest order, this point of view must also be such as to be accepted by the world as true in essence.[3] Literature is therefore a presentation and interpretation of life, — a "criticism of life," is Matthew Arnold's well-known phrase, — and, as such, must be of the highest value in acquainting the young with life as it is in its more permanent and universal aspects, and with the judgments upon it, the interpretations of it, and the emotional colouring given to it by writers of wide knowledge, deep insight, and right feeling.[4]

Essential Truth of Literature.

There is an ancient objection to literature, — ancient and, though often answered, constantly recurring, — that it presents life in an over-drawn, fantastic, and exaggerated manner. Aristotle answered it in part, and the answer has been repeated, amplified, and added to.[5] It must, however, be admitted that what untrained minds get

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[1] See the introductory chapter to Palgrave's *Landscape in Poetry*, New York, 1897.

[2] See La Farge's *Considerations on Painting*, Lecture II., New York, 1895, and W. H. Mallock, "Relation of Art to Truth," FORUM, IX. 36 ff.

[3] Shelley's *Defence of Poetry* and Woodberry's "A New Defence of Poetry" in *Heart of Man*.

[4] Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* is a familiar and interesting presentation of these points of view.

[5] See Butcher's *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, Chapter III., London and New York, 1898; Sidney's *Defence of Poesie;* Shelley, Mallock and Woodberry, cited above. Gayley and Scott's *Literary Criticism*, Boston, 1899, is a bibliography to the whole range of this and other topics of criticism.

from a book *is* often the exaggerated and impossible part, while the underlying truth, the universal, eludes them; that their interest is mainly in action, and very little in a "philosophy of life." Their judgment of values in the world of literature is, as in everything else, childish. They do not know the difference between wisdom and folly, between common sense and balderdash, between courage and braggadocio, between beauty and tinsel. This is far from being an argument against the truthfulness of good literature. If it has any bearing on the matter at all, it is, *a fortiori*, merely an evidence of the need of the sound and wholesome. Cultivated minds find in literature (and history) the most real and faithful presentation of life: they see that they are wiser in the realm of the human spirit for reading it.[1] And this wisdom lies in well-chosen and thoughtful reading, for whoever has the patience and the capacity. Lowell has said all this and much more in one of his inimitable essays: "But have you ever rightly considered what the mere ability to read means? That it is the key which admits us to the whole world of thought and fancy and imagination? to the company of saint and sage, of the wisest and wittiest at their wisest and wittiest moment? That it enables us to see with the keenest eyes, hear with the finest ears, and listen to the sweetest voices of all time?"[2] The case is well summed up by Commissioner Harris:[3] "All that man does contributes to a revelation of human life in its entirety, but art and literature lead all other branches of human learning in their capacity to manifest and illustrate the desires and aspirations, the thoughts and deeds

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[1] Some most interesting collections of the praises of books have been made. Among them are Frederic Harrison's *Choice of Books*, London, 1886, New York, 1895; Ireland's *Book-Lover's Enchiridion*, London, 1884; C. F. Richardson's *Choice of Books*, Balfour's *Pleasures of Reading*, London, 1888; Baldwin's *Book-Lover*, Chicago, 1892; Farrar's *Great Books*, New York, 1898.

[2] Lowell's *Books and Libraries*.

[3] "Why Art and Literature Ought to be Studied in Elementary Schools," by W. T. Harris, EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, XIII. 325, April, 1897.

of mankind. Hence the educational value of these things. In the presence of the conflict of moral ideas, the struggle of passion against what is rational, the attacks of sin and crime on the divine order of the world, all that is deepest in human character is manifested. Art and literature portray these serious collisions, and like the mountain upheavals that break and tilt up the strata of the crust of the earth and reveal to the geologist the sequence of the formations from the most primitive to the most recent, so these artistic situations reveal to all men the successive strata in the evolution of human emotions, ideas, and actions. Thereby the single individual comes to know the springs of action of his fellow-men." The objection that mere knowledge of books does not bring knowledge of life must be admitted. Other experience, contact with life in other ways, is also necessary. But it is just such an arrangement that modern education desires, and not a monastic seclusion in the world of books.

Mental Training.

Next to the knowledge of human nature and of life, we seek in literature a means of training. The mind grows by acquiring ideas, by the exercise of memory and judgment. Literature, containing material interesting of itself, and ordered in a way that the immature mind can follow, is one of the best means of promoting such growth. It widens the intellectual horizon, and places the elements that make up human life in just and illuminating relationships; but more than this, it presents those concepts and interests which, far more than the concepts of science and mathematics, are the habitual and essential subjects of human thought.

Pleasure.

In Matthew Arnold's essay already cited[1] there is a clear and vigorous insistence on two important elements in our nature which are satisfied by literature: the sense of beauty and the sense of conduct. Most children have a sense of beauty; it would be rash to say that all do. Literature, particularly stories, is one of the earliest pleasures that they find when they begin to come into possession of an intel-

[1] *Literature and Science.*

lectual kingdom. We hear much of the pleasures of reading. A very little analysis of the phrase shows that they are of many kinds. There is the pleasure that comes from the normal functioning of our minds, the pleasure of mere mental activity; the pleasure that arises from the sense of power or the acquisition of knowledge; the pleasure in beauty of picture or in exquisite phrasing; the pleasure in high ideals inspiring generous emotions, etc. All of these pleasures are present more or less to the child in his reading, but none of them quite so much as the delight of entering into a world of beauty, a world of the imagination, henceforth his own world. In Tennyson's *A Dream of Fair Women* and *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*, in Keats's sonnet *On First Looking into Chapman's Homer*, we have two poets' records of what such pleasure meant to them. Though it means less to the less gifted, its value is never to be ignored. It is an overstrenuous view of life and education which depreciates pure pleasure of any sort. The beauty of the world of "once upon a time," where nothing was wrong — or, if wrong, was picturesquely so and spectacularly punished — where something was always happening, where the skies were always blue and the woods were always green, is, it may be, an elementary type of beauty. But it pleases the child and helps to develop his taste. His admiration, if properly fed, grows until it takes in higher forms of beauty, passing easily and gradually from the simple to the higher æsthetic pleasures.

It is, we believe, idle to claim that all pupils can be brought to these higher artistic pleasures. Nature has put up the barriers against many of them. But it is the business of the school to proceed as if these barriers were not; to bring before the children the best literature they can understand. To "foster the sense of beauty," the source of some of our highest pleasures, and a safeguard against many of the lowest pleasures, is one of the cardinal duties of the elementary school.

The third function of literature as a school subject is the cultivation of the moral sense, "the sense of conduct." On

this subject it is easy to go too far; easy to forget the frequent gap between æsthetic and intellectual development on the one hand, and the will to do right on the other. Many of the pleas for literature as moral salvation seem purely sentimental. But that some of the elements of good literature make for morality is beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Ethical Value.

(1) Literature supplies "the expulsive power of a higher emotion." The mind filled with the beautiful ideals of literature is less open to the sordid temptation of gain, to the pettiness of spite and gossip, to the seductions of sensuality. Every mind will have its treasure-house of pleasant images. It is well for the child if they be of such materials as are supplied by Irving, Scott, Tennyson, and Stevenson. At a certain stage of development, generally between twelve and sixteen, the enlargement of the imagination through reading goes on very rapidly. The inner life expands as in no period since infancy. The importance of the elements that enter into this expansion, coincident as it is with the growth into manhood and womanhood, can hardly be overestimated.[1]

(2) In addition to this, good literature supplies good ideals of conduct, — makes the good attractive and the base ugly. Imitation is the strongest impulse to action in childhood, and admiration is the strongest incentive to imitation. How readily children, especially those who have good imaginations and are therefore most subject to enticement and most worth saving, imitate their favourite heroes, is well known. A good story is worth a dozen good precepts. The immediate power of a right ideal well presented in a story has often been shown.[2]

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[1] A series of interesting investigations made by Professor J. E. Russell revealed the fact that at this period the increase in the reading habit was extremely rapid; and that where good literature was not obtainable, boys and girls read not only stuff that was worthless from its vacuity, but much that was positively and dangerously bad.

[2] The Romans knew the full value of this; hence their use of heroic traditions. See Monroe's *Source Book of the History of Education.*

(3) While our modern philosophy may not accept the Socratic doctrine that to know right is to do right, it is undeniable that right knowing is necessary to right doing, and that just views "make for righteousness." Now, good literature, as we have already shown, seeks to present the phenomena of life in just and true relations. To come to know good literature is to see truly and fairly; to get beyond and outside of one's narrow personal point of view, and see things as they are to all men. Such an attitude cannot fail to increase respect for the rights of others.

(4) The emotional element of literature lies close to the springs of conduct. The clenched hand, the sigh, the tear, that the story calls forth are due to the same emotion that prompts the generous action. The results in conduct are various.[1] The boy may start to fight the Indians; the sentimental girl may weep over the troubles of a fictitious heroine and leave the household duties to her mother; and the thoughtful reader may be led to speak a kindlier word, or interfere in some case of oppression or brutality. The emotion unexpressed in action, we are told, tends to weaken the fibre of character, to enervate the will. Is not this one of the specious half-truths that lead us astray because they sound so well? Must we rush to action, Quixote-like, whenever we have an emotion? What a tangled and disheartening place the world would soon come to be, especially to children, if they acted on this rule! The truth seems rather to be, that although emotion habitually escaping in the sigh and tear alone results in such characters as that of the sentimental and inactive girl, yet our minds are capable of storing up emotions through which our characters become gradually changed. So at least some of our own poets have said, — poets who, like Wordsworth, had observed and meditated deeply upon the human heart. Moreover, morality is as much a matter of inhibition as of action. The one whose mind is softened by pity and guided by reason is likely to be considerate of others, *i. e.*, moral.

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[1] James, *Talks to Teachers*, Chapter XVI., New York, 1899.

The study of literature in the elementary schools is to be conducted, then, with reference to these foregoing aims: Wider knowledge of life, mental training, æsthetic pleasure, and the cultivation of the moral sense.

We now proceed to a consideration of the problems involved in the teaching of literature. We are met at the outset by a very interesting question: *Can literature be taught?* Some ingenious arguments have been offered to show that it cannot.[1] Literature, we are told, is a thing of the spirit, of the emotions, intangible, elusive, evanescent under the light of analysis like the dew-drop under the sun. Examples of ludicrous failures to impart the spirit of literature could be gathered in every school. But these would, we believe, only prove that literature had not been well taught in those instances.

Can Literature be Taught?

One element in literature is the intellectual. It includes the meaning of the words, the meaning of the sentences, the relation of parts to each other and to the whole piece, and the general thought involved in the whole. These are matters indisputably within the scope of ordinary teaching. The pupil may be told these, or led to discover them; he may, moreover, be examined upon them, so that the most exacting standard can be satisfied.

Knowledge.

The other element in literature is concerned with the vaguer province of taste and feeling. These are often subtle, intangible, elusive. An intellectual grasp of the ideas does not insure the resultant complex of emotions that go with full appreciation. The book may be *understood*, and yet seem dull. To secure results in this field is at once difficult and essential to true success in teaching literature. But we must believe that it can be done because it often is done. To help the pupil get both the thought and the feeling, to supply him with the necessary associations or

Taste and Feeling.

[1] See J. Churton Collins on *The Study of Literature*, London, 1891, a discussion on the question, *Can Literature be Taught?* by Andrew Lang, in THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS, and a reply by Professor Brander Matthews in THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, April, 1892.

the materials out of which to make them for himself, to show him the beauty of form, the fitness of phrase and the music of language, — in other words, to help him not merely to understand but to appreciate, — is part of the teacher's work in teaching literature. We have said that taste and emotion are subtle things; and their subtlety appears not less in their origin and growth than in their essence. The atmosphere of the school, its standards and ideals; the personality of the teacher, his attitude towards things beautiful and good; all these enter into the sum of impressions that go to form the child's tastes and emotions; and in no part of the school work do they count for so much as in the hours devoted to literature. To be strong without being crude, to be gentle without being weak, to be sensitive to beauty without being sentimental, and, above all, to be able tactfully to show these characteristics in the most human of the school-room subjects, the lesson in literature, is to have the first and best means of success. Taste and feeling are associative, contagious. What the strong teacher has to give, most of his pupils will get; what he sees and feels they may be led in part to see and feel. But they will see and feel in varying degrees; some of them much, some little or none. The æsthetic faculties are in general sooner reached by literature than by other forms of art, — pictures possibly excepted. But not every pupil will enjoy the same literature, or be helped to enjoy it by the same teacher. If the sum of failures be small, the work will have been well done.

When the teacher confronts the class with a poem or story to be taught, the question he must answer is, What shall I do with it? The question must concern not only the given piece of literature, but the given class; it may therefore be restated, How shall I bring this class to understand and appreciate this piece of literature? The answer is many-sided.

1. Literature is a thing for the ear as well as for the eye; indeed, it was originally a thing only for the ear. This fact leads to several conclusions. (1) Much can and should be read aloud to the children which they cannot yet read for themselves. A class of ten-year-olds can

Oral Literature:

follow Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, Scott's novels, Macaulay's ballads, and many other things whose difficulties of thought and diction are overcome and whose substance is rendered real and lifelike by the teacher's oral renderings.

Easy to Understand.

(2) The pleasures of literature are enhanced by the cultivation of the ear. The rhythms of verse and prose, the fitness between the sound and the idea, often escape the child unless he hears them. He has not learned to read literature until he has come to hear the sound while he reads silently. And the necessary equipment for this feat is a full memory of the sounds of literary pieces. Naturally the more resonant types of literature are the best for the early years. The rhythms of the nursery rhymes, and of heroic poems like Burns's *Bannockburn*, Campbell's *Ye Mariners of England*, Browning's *How they Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*, and Tennyson's *The Charge of the Light Brigade* are a better introduction to rhythmic writing than are the subtler forms of Shelley and Milton.

Trains the Ear.

(3) The oral reading, either by the teacher or by the pupils, is a good means of passing in review the whole poem, and seizing it as a single unity, after it has been studied in detail. It is also of frequent value in arousing interest before the closer study begins. Many people owe their first real appreciation of literature to some good reader.

A Means of Grasping the Whole.

2. The mere presentation of an object is not the whole of teaching. A class in biology might find the sight of a crayfish very interesting, but could hardly be said to have studied the crayfish until it had learned something of its anatomy, its habits, and its general biological relationships. Neither is a piece of literature known until the relation of its parts is comprehended, and the general ideas or feelings it is meant to convey appreciated. In a given piece of literature there are words to be learned, pictures to be formed in the imagination, structure to be considered, allusions to be understood and appreciated, figures of speech to be felt

Literature a Thing to be Studied.

and comprehended, a fundamental notion to be grasped, comparisons with other mental possessions to be made, and, in growing degree as we pass from the lower to the higher grades, taste and critical judgment to be cultivated.

The Meanings of Words.

(1) Reading must begin with an understanding of the meaning of the words. If the words that are new or that suggest strange or incomprehensible ideas are so many as to bring discouragement, something simpler must be chosen. The meanings of the words are often given before the piece is read. This is well, if there are not many new words to be given. On the other hand, anything new is better remembered if learned just at the point where it is needed; and the habit of looking for the meanings of words — partly by conjecture from the context, partly by reference to the dictionary — should be begun early. The insidious habit of guessing at a word and "letting it go at that" is a vice of thousands of otherwise thoughtful readers. When new words are met, they are to be learned in their sound, in their written form, and in their application; in the later grades it is often useful and interesting to learn their origin.

The Treatment of Allusions.

(2) Most of our literature is more or less allusive. The point of many a good thing is lost to us if we do not get the allusion involved. Sometimes it is enough to know the origin and significance of an allusion; as, for example, in such sayings as "He has an axe to grind," or "He has paid too dear for his whistle." In such cases a simple explanation of the meaning is sufficient. But there are other allusions, common in our best literature, which are not so easily dealt with; allusions which are memories either of scenes from literature or history, or of the ideas and phrases of the great masters of English literature. Echoes of history, of classic and Norse mythology, of folk-tale and fable, of romantic story, of the Bible and Shakspere and Milton and all our other great literary storehouses, meet us everywhere. To understand the passages in which they occur it is generally necessary to know the allusion. But to appreciate the passages, that is, to get the feeling that they should arouse, to en-

joy them as a blending of old and new, with a background of memory and emotion, one should have known the allusion before, and, if possible, in its original place. For example, the reader has his pleasure doubled if he reads such lines as

> "In teacup times of hood and hoop
> Or when the patch was worn,"[1]

with full memories of the manners of the eighteenth century; or Milton's invocation at the beginning of *Paradise Lost*, with full memories of the English Bible. Such reading at its best is the result of ripe culture; but the beginnings may be made in the elementary school. It is well to make references to what the children already know; to associate the new thing they read with the same idea or the same feeling met elsewhere; to get the pupils, in short, to read in this associative frame of mind.

The peculiar difficulty of the task of cultivating such appreciation is apparent from the nature of the case. Our pleasure in these allusions comes, as we have already said, in associating the old with the new. Now, to the child, it is almost all new; his stock of memories is small. And he, no more than we, takes pleasure in the allusion just learned. He learns it as a fact, briefly given, without power to arouse his imagination or his feelings: the allusion is explained, and he comprehends but does not enjoy. But the teacher is building for the future: when the same allusion again occurs, it comes as a memory, bringing the pleasure both of recognition and of former associations. Those allusions, however, which are learned not as allusions, but which have first been known in their original place in history or literature, are the best appreciated. The boy who has read the stories of the Round Table or the ballads of Macaulay will better appreciate a reference to Launcelot or Horatius than he who has only looked up the names in a book of reference. In this as in so many educational problems, we must remember that we are working

[1] From Tennyson's *The Talking Oak*.

towards a remote end, through many imperfect results, and that we cannot make a "clean sweep" of the ground as we go.

(3) Children are serious and literal. The jesting of adults often seems foolish to them; it is not their kind of play. Figures of speech often seem absurd and useless contradictions. But the ability to comprehend figurative language must be part of their intellectual training. Analysis, classification and naming of figures of speech, even in the upper grades, seem useless if not hopeless. What is needed is the ability to grasp the significance of the figure. To this end the teacher will sometimes interpret the figure, sometimes have the children interpret it, point out the respect in which the comparison holds, and state the idea in literal language. Further than this it seems undesirable to go in the elementary schools.

Figures of Speech.

(4) Galton pointed out[1] a number of years ago that the untrained mind thinks largely in terms of pictures. The greatest pleasure, if not the greatest profit, that children have in reading is in the mental pictures of scenes and action. For this reason, such books as *The Arabian Nights* and *Robinson Crusoe* remain perennially fresh and new. Nor does this power of picturing what one reads ever lose its value for the adult. The material of the imagination is the stock in trade of the artist, the writer, the scientist, and the man of affairs. The trained mind may come to think less in pictures and more in general terms; but it will still owe much of its pleasure and of its effectiveness in creative work to the imagination. From yet another point of view than that of æsthetic pleasure or creative efficiency, the vividness of the image is of the highest importance. (*a*) The imagination is the readiest means of reaching the emotions. Therefore the pictures that are left in the imagination by good literature are a better stimulus to right action, a more potent cause of good taste than are the abstract and reasoned formulæ of instruction. (*b*) That which definitely impresses the memory as a picture

The Imagination.

[1] *Inquiries into Human Faculty*, New York, 1883.

is better remembered than are the analytical and critical judgments deduced from the study of literature. (*c*) In growing minds the memories already stored up come to have new applications and new significance. If the story is remembered merely as an ethical teaching of a certain sort, it is not likely ever to take on new meaning; but if it is remembered as a story, that is, as a representation of some fragment of the drama of human life, it remains there to produce new emotions and to stimulate new inferences as the mind becomes enlarged by new experience. For example, the memory of Robinson Crusoe's single-handed fight with nature means something to the boy, but much more to the man who has had a decade of the struggle for a foothold in the world.

Filling out a Scene.

The formation of the picture is, therefore, one of the first things to be looked to in teaching literature. Sometimes the pupils' efforts need to be supplemented by a suggestion from the teacher, by some artist's representation of the scene, or by some other means which may help the class to see more vividly. Suppose they are reading the tournament scene from *Ivanhoe*. It will seldom be enough merely to have the scene read. The arrangement of the lists, the positions of the combatants and the spectators, the armour and the gay costumes glittering in the sunlight, the successive steps of the action, and all the details in that rich and picturesque scene should be inquired about by the teacher and talked of freely by the class. An outline sketch drawn on the blackboard will give a basis for the topography of the picture. In general, such detailed discussion is not only useful in helping the pupils to get the scene fully, but is an exercise which will give the keenest pleasure and stimulate the liveliest intellectual activity.

Illustrative Material.

In this connection it is necessary to discuss the place of illustrative material. If, as has been asserted, the power to form the picture is the condition of enjoyment of the scene, we must take account of the stock of memories which the pupils have and out of which they are to make the new picture. Obviously there are wide differ-

ences in their mental outfits. The observant country boy would need no help to see Whittier's *Barefoot Boy* or Bryant's *Waterfowl* except the stimulating questions of the teacher. But the ocean to an untravelled inland boy, or the scenes of *Snow Bound* to a Southern boy, would be very vague. So the wild mountain scenery of Scott, or the masterpieces of art, or the scenes of conflict involving long-past customs and accoutrements, may lose much of their vividness for lack of a background of appropriate memories. It is here that the importance of illustrative material appears. The use of good and cheap pictures in the school-room has steadily grown, and they may now be procured with little cost and trouble. Pictures will not take the place of first-hand knowledge; but they will do much to help the pupil to a fair appreciation of a scene made of such elements as they represent. There is, however, another side to this question which must not be overlooked. Literature is a thing not only of the eye, but of the spirit. Its vital interests are, after all, not in the visible scene, not in the landscape, not in the visual reproduction of the physical counterparts of vanished heroes, — but in deeds, in feeling, in character. "The world of literature is the world of the imagination; and its ideals, its activities, its types of character find their best reflection in the mirror of the mind. It may help to give a sense of reality to the scenes of *The Lady of the Lake* to see a photograph of Scotch mountains; but the best evidence of the greatness of the poem is that its stirring actions and emotions may appeal to a boy who has never seen any landscape but New Jersey sand-flats or stretches of level prairie. The heroism portrayed in one of Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome* may thrill a boy whose limited historical knowledge would lead him to think of Cæsar and Pericles as contemporaries, dressed in modern regimentals. This is not to deny the gain in understanding and appreciation from having a background of geographical and historical conditions in the mind of the reader; it is to assert, rather, that great literature is universal in its appeal, because its essential interest is concerned with the realm of the mind and feelings,

and not primarily with the realm of historical and geographical fact. Hence the illustrative material which is most helpful is that which presents, like the literature, the ideal elements." [1]

The Study of Structure.

(5) A literary work has form and structure; like a painting, it has a definite arrangement of parts designed to present its idea in the most effective manner. To appreciate this structure is a part of right reading. Obviously the consideration of literary form has no place in the primary grades. At that stage the child's whole mental energy is used in the effort to get the content. He has no energy left to give to thoughts of structure, no interest in such matters, and no adequate analytic power; it is enough for him now only to get the picture clearly, to understand the idea, and to experience the appropriate emotions. Later in the course, in the second half of the elementary school, he can begin to consider how a literary work is constituted. He can see that a story has "a beginning, a middle, and an end"; that an incident belongs here rather than there; that there is a regular sequence of causes and effects; that there are various ways of presenting character; that there is inherent fitness between scene and incident; that, in short, the literary composition is not a chance collocation of ideas, but an organic structure. Minute and critical analysis is not meant, but only the perception of the larger and more obvious elements in structure. Such a study could be made of the form of Longfellow's *King Robert of Sicily*. The story falls easily into the following divisions: —

1. The opening scene, the church, the chant, and the haughty words of the King.
2. The change: his appearance, his discovery of the Angel in his place, and his baffled rage.
3. His humiliation in the various scenes that follow.
4. His penitence, and his restoration to the throne.

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[1] TEACHERS COLLEGE RECORD, I. No. 3, May, 1900.

It would be noted that the setting and tone are ecclesiastical and religious; that the splendour of the journey to Rome is in contrast with the condition of the deposed King; that his repentance comes appropriately at the solemn festival of Easter; and that, as in the opening he is presented giving defiance to the Church's teaching of humility, so in the end his courtiers find him kneeling by the throne in silent prayer. Other points in the structure and in the descriptive details would appear; these are suggested as typical.[1]

Or, suppose the lesson be on some prose classic, like Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*. As introduction there might be the general comment that this is Irving's treatment of a legend found among the old Dutch inhabitants, or that the story is one form of a common myth, that of the fabulously long sleep. After a first rapid reading of the piece, some of its simpler literary touches could be pointed out: the early intimation of coming improbabilities in the "faery mountains" and similar phrases; the various points of view in which Rip's character is shown; the relation between this and his presence in the mountains, and the effects upon him of what he sees upon his return to his native village. Throughout the story the well-chosen word and the felicitous phrase should be noted, that the pupils may come to enjoy the piece, not only as a good story, but also as a well-written story. Reference would of course be made to Jefferson's version of the tale and his inimitable treatment of the character.

There are many good essays, like the best of Lamb's, with their quaint humour and genial tone, and some of Burroughs's, with their observant, half-scientific, half-literary attitude towards nature, which should find a place in the school-room. In reading the essay the main purpose will be to get and enjoy the author's ideas. Study of the form will be limited, perhaps, to noting the larger divisions of the thought, the attitude of

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[1] For critical studies of this sort the teacher will find a valuable and interesting book in Winchester's *Principles of Literary Criticism*, New York, 1899.

the author towards his subject, the things that are obviously well-said. In the treatment of all the types, indeed, it is to be borne steadily in mind that the grasp of the thought, the appreciation of the story, the experiencing of the emotion, — in general, the enrichment of the pupil's mind, — is the prime object of the work.

It is not, however, to be assumed that every literary work is perfect in all its parts; such uninformed criticism finds itself involved in strange difficulties through its attempt to justify every detail.

An Objection.

It is sometimes objected that such work cannot be done in the elementary school, because pupils have neither the interest nor the ability for it. Such an objection, happily, need not be met on *a priori* grounds. It is answered by the fact that such work is now done in many schools, and apparently with as good results in interest and intelligence as any part of the school program. The essential conditions are a reasonably intelligent set of pupils, a community able and willing to buy books, a properly ordered course of study, and intelligent teachers.

Critical Study.

(6) From the analytical treatment of the literature, as described above, to the critical view of it, is but a step. And it has seemed to many teachers of sanguine temperament as if that step could easily be taken. In certain large city school systems, the writing of "book-reviews" or "criticisms" has become established as a regular school exercise in the seventh and eighth grades. The results are provocative of doubt. One can discern in these efforts something of the hollowness and insincerity associated with the school compositions of a generation ago. Borrowed phrases involving judgments beyond the reach of school children, and seen to be borrowed by the looseness of their application, are too frequent. Hasty generalizations, lack of perspective, misplaced enthusiasm, and all the vices of the "ill-fed criticism" of the contemporary periodical are here in miniature. Formal written criticism, judged by its results, seems to be a failure.

And yet we should all agree that we want to bring the pupils to a proper critical attitude, — proper, that is, to their age and development. As the elementary school ends the school life of so many pupils, their attitude towards literature becomes, in a democratic government, a thing of national importance; for their attitude towards literature is closely related to many of the qualities that make for or against good citizenship.[1] The problem is difficult. We cannot rest the case on authority, for "the authority of criticism" is an unstable thing. We cannot trust to independence of judgment, for the mass of pupils are barred by the lack of time and ability from acquiring the store of ideas and the power of discrimination necessary to right independent judgment. Out of the complexities of the situation seem to emerge certain principles that may be accepted and applied: (*a*) As the pupil's mind grows in wealth of ideas and in power of making judgments, it is desirable that he should turn over, examine, and put into words his impressions from the literature he has read. This he does also with impressions from other sources. (*b*) As his introspective life enlarges, he will naturally seek to find and express reasons for his approval or disapproval of his literary experiences. This, too, he does with regard to other experiences, seeking to justify and explain them by reference to standards acquired in the world of thought, feeling, and taste. (*c*) It is desirable that certain standards of judgment be given him. These standards will not be æsthetic formulæ, which he could neither understand nor apply, but memories vivid and complete of pieces of literature conceded by the lovers of good literature to be good. To these as standards in expression, in taste, and in judgment, he could unconsciously refer the new things that he reads. As the pupil whose home life supplies him with memories of refined and considerate behaviour has a basis for judging rudeness and selfishness, so the pupil with a store of good literary memories

The Critical Attitude Desirable.

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[1] See the discussion in President Hadley's *Education of the American Citizen*, New York, 1901.

has a basis for judging the tawdry and shallow stuff that he meets in print. It must be admitted that he will often fail to make such reference; that the memory of Gray's *Elegy* or Shakspere's *Julius Cæsar* will not always remain as a touchstone of sentiment or of character study; that, indeed, even those whose appreciation of literature is best in the elementary school and whose love of good literature leads them to continue to read good books after their school days, will probably never know much good literature well or critically. But the inadequacy of the means to produce the highest result is no proof of their lack of value. The school must do the best it can with the means at command; and it may well expect in its teaching of literature to raise, though slightly, the general average of intelligence, feeling, and morality. And who dares deny the efficacy of church or school because it does not fully achieve its own ideals?

Study of the Fundamental Idea.

(7) Another aim that the teaching of the literature must include is an appreciation of the spirit and significance of the piece of literature as a whole. Failure in such appreciation, not uncommon even in adults, is due generally to the lack of the thoughtful attitude of mind. Many readers never ask themselves, Why did the author write this? What was his interest in this theme? How did he see it? And yet these are interesting questions, capable often of a simple answer. Wordsworth's pleasure in the memory of the picture of the *Daffodils* or of the *Solitary Reaper*, Whittier's pleasure in the childhood memories of *Snow Bound* or *The Barefoot Boy*, Dickens's delight in caricature and the absurdities of *Pickwick Papers*, or in the portrayal of generous sentiment among the lowly, ought to be easily within the discernment of a child of twelve. We do not know a piece of literature until we know its fundamental idea, its spirit, its motive.

Memorizing.

(8) It has long been a practice to have children commit to memory bits of good literature. It is to be hoped that the practice will never die out. Provided the literature is well selected, — that is, good in itself and adapted to the pupils' development, — provided also that

the exercise is not made hateful as task-work, the custom has certain obvious advantages: It enlarges and enriches the vocabulary; it cultivates the sense of rhythm; it supplies a storehouse of memories valuable for their beauty, their wisdom, and their ethics; it makes surer the possession of a touchstone by which other literatures, and even life, may be judged; and, finally, much that is thus learned in childhood, though only partially appreciated then, takes on new meaning and beauty in later life.

(9) Recent educational activity has been much concerned with courses of study, and what is called "correlation" has provoked much printed matter. English, as the subject including the largest number of topics of human knowledge, has been regarded as the principal instrument of correlation. It has been attempted so to choose and dispose the literature in the elementary school course that nothing read shall be unrelated to some central subject or interest then before the school. Such a centre of interest might be the science, the history, the manual work, or even the season of the year. Thus there might be a butterfly month, or a Revolutionary month, or a basket month, or a snow month, in the year's program. It might impart a little welcome enlivenment to these pages to reprint some of the schemes that have been gravely offered. But the subject is really entitled to serious discussion.

Correlation.

The following principles can, I think, be maintained: —

(*a*) That correlation overdone deprives the school day of that variety of interest which is the need and the demand of normal childhood.

(*b*) That forced and artificial correlation, which seizes upon accidental rather than essential relationships, helps to destroy rather than to cultivate good habits of thought.

(*c*) That it is just as valuable an exercise to bring subjects that have been learned some time since to bear upon subjects now under discussion, as to range them side by side on the same day or in the same week. Indeed, the comparison is often the more effective when one of the ideas has become an old and thoroughly assimilated mental possession.

(*d*) That each of the school subjects is, or should be, of sufficient worth to be studied for itself, in its own spirit and method, rather than be made a mere handmaiden of other subjects.

(*e*) To teach the facts of history or science with the colouring of sentiment and imagination proper to the literary use of these facts, is to teach bad history or bad science; and to make a lesson in history of *Barbara Frietchie*, a lesson in nature study of the myth of Arachne, or a lesson in geography of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is to endanger a work of art without getting any adequate return in either history, nature study, or geography. Such a misuse of material merely argues ignorance and loose thinking.

(*f*) There is a legitimate use of correlation in literature, which consists in bringing in, in right proportion, in the right spirit, and at the right time, facts and ideas borrowed from other provinces of human thought. To know the feeling of New England prior to the war will help to explain Whittier's anti-slavery poems; to know something of icebergs and the Sargasso Sea will make more vivid certain passages in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner;* to know a spider and its web helps us to enjoy the myth of Arachne. But we must discriminate between what is principal and what is subordinate, between what is vital and what is accidental. Whittier's anti-slavery poems are an expression of emotion and belief that were personal, although shared by many of his contemporaries; the story of the Ancient Mariner is a story of a spiritual experience, set in a weird and picturesque region where the laws of geography have little place; and the myth of Arachne is an imaginative attempt to account for a fact in nature by reference to certain well-known human traits. And the right use, in a literature lesson, of the ideas borrowed from history, from geography, and from nature study, is to employ them merely to interpret and make vivid the literature.

(*g*) It seems in place to add as a final comment on this subject that correlation is only thinking. There is no thinking without bringing ideas together, and no educated person either

tries to think only in terms of one department of human knowledge, or confuses the appropriate relationships of the ideas he brings together.

(10) The study of literary biography remains to be considered. It is desirable that children know — largely for future use — the authors of what they read, and their time and place. It is also sometimes desirable that they know something of these biographies in so far as they are related to the work in a way that the children can understand. Certain limitations must, however, be pointed out. **Literary Biographies.**

(*a*) The lives of literary men are usually uninteresting if not incomprehensible, to children. They better understand the actions and motives which lead to achievements of another sort: of warriors, rulers, inventors, discoverers. The subtle relations between the poet's experiences and his work are for older minds.

(*b*) Mere personalia are not biography in any worthy sense of the term; at best they are only gossip.[1]

(*c*) The study of the biography of an author is best taken up *after* the study of his work. There is until then no reason whatever why the child should care to hear anything about the man.

(11) In considering a piece of literature, under such topics as the foregoing, the question of lesson plans and the conduct of the lesson must receive special consideration. **Lesson Plans.**

(*a*) What should a lesson plan include? Elaborate plans are usually a burden. No teacher can foresee just what direction the treatment of a lesson will have to take. To adhere to the minutiæ of a full and elaborate plan will be to disregard many of the most valuable opportunities arising from the spontaneous doubts, difficulties, and ideas of the class. The best points of a lesson are often those that spring up, as it

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[1] See Lowell's sane and lively essay on "Chapman," and Agnes Repplier's essay on "Biography" in *Counsel on the Reading of Books*, Boston, 1901.

were, by accident: they are often more vivid to the pupils, and more needed than anything that the teacher can foresee. Elaborate plans should be made during a teacher's period of training or in the beginning of his career. But the sooner he can discard them, the better will be his teaching. The full plan is of value principally in the teacher's own preparation.

(*b*) Some plan, however, the teacher must have: a few large points, carefully thought out and associated firmly in his mind with a considerable number of details. To this large outline he must adhere if he wishes the lesson to have unity, — that is, to leave in the minds of the class a unified impression of the literature as a whole, and of the beauty, interest, and significance of its parts.

Working Outlines.

(*c*) In preparing such a plan there are certain things to be considered: the appropriate form of introduction; the meaning and spirit of the piece as a whole, — that is, the author's feeling, meaning, or point of view; the story or thought itself, in whole and in details; the relation of its parts; the type of literary form to which it belongs; the meanings of words and allusions; the literary beauties of form and picture; the presentation of the work as a whole.[1] A plan of the sort here meant is illustrated in the following treatment, for the sixth grade, of Browning's *How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix*: —

1. An introduction, giving Browning's account of how he came to write the poem.

2. A brief comparison of it in theme and spirit to some of the ballads and other poems of action which the children have read.

An Example.

3. Call attention to the scene at starting.

4. Note the galloping movement of the verse, and its fitness to the theme.

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[1] This is manifestly impossible in a long classic, extending through a number of lessons. In such cases the constant reference to preceding portions of a work will enable the pupil to grasp it as a whole.

5. Note the hurry of the action.

6. By what means is the horse Roland shown to be the hero of the poem?

7. How are the flight of time and the distance travelled given?

8. Pick out (*a*) the vivid and effective scenes, (*b*) the lines whose sound is pleasing.

9. What now appears to have been the author's own interest in the story; that is, his motive in writing it?

10. Have the poem read by good readers in the class.

As the poem has "no historical basis whatever," its place in time need not trouble us. As to its geography, the location of Ghent and Aix may be briefly mentioned. What the poem should leave uppermost in the minds of the pupils is the spirited language and action, the succession of vivid scenes that pass through the mind of the poet, and the sympathetic portrayal of the horse as the hero of the story.

It is evident that some pieces of literature will need fuller analysis, others less. Sometimes the best results are reached by the mere reading of the selection by the class or the teacher. No general rule can be laid down, except that already given, that the literature is to be so treated as to secure the fullest appreciation of which the class is capable. Analysis is valuable in proportion as it reveals new ideas within the interest and comprehension of the class, and is a true interpretation of the literature; and a plan is valuable mainly according to the selection of the topics to be presented.

Introductions.

The starting-point in learning any new thing is past experiences: things are known when they become related to things already known. Hence arises the custom of beginning a new subject with an introduction designed to link the new with the old. It is possible to make such an introduction either serviceable or useless. An introduction is useless if it relates the literature to ideas with which the literature has nothing in common; worse than useless, if it starts associations out of harmony with the spirit and tone

of the literature. An introduction is serviceable when it arouses interest in the coming subject, furnishes information necessary for comprehending the subject, or puts the pupils into the appropriate attitude of mind and feeling. Sometimes the teacher may begin with no introduction, knowing the necessary "apperceptive mass" to be already there; sometimes the general nature of the story may be touched upon, as, "This is a story of how a mistreated animal secured justice for himself";[1] sometimes the literature will be referred to some experience the children have had, or to some other literature which it resembles or from which it differs. It has been said already that one test of the successful teaching of a piece of literature is the leaving the student with a true impression of its spirit and general purport. It is to this aim that the introduction also should address itself.

Outside Study.

The present writer believes that literature is a subject for study; that to assume that intellectual effort brought to bear on a subject makes it distasteful is to hold a brief for the stupid and the lazy; that while it is true that some literature needs no study to understand its message, the most of the literature read in the schools needs an active and an open mind. That he apply himself to a subject and master it so far as he can is a just demand to make of the pupil in the elementary school. To do this he should have more time than the classroom treatment of the subject allows. "Home study," so called, should include the literature as well as the other subjects. Such study, if left unguided, is not likely to have definite results. After the stage at which the mere learning to read is the main object, it is well to give the pupil certain topics to consider, certain questions to answer, upon the literature he is asked to study. These topics would naturally be from the teacher's plan for presenting the work. It is equally a mistake here, however, to adhere to this method until it becomes a stiff and mechanical thing. The value of spontaneous activity must not be forgotten.

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[1] Longfellow's *The Bell of Atri.*

(12) Amid the bewildering multiplicity of printed things the inexpert are lost. The art of using books and papers well and economically must be learned as a means to an intellectual life. Even the man who does little reading needs to learn not only how to pick and choose, but how to read rapidly or slowly.[1] So inherent in our civilization are the conditions that call for these different powers, that they should be cultivated in the elementary school; it should be one of the specific objects of the work in literature to train not only in the close and careful reading which the literary classic and the text-book require, but also in the rapid and cursory reading which is enough for the lighter and simpler stuff. In work of the latter kind, however, the teacher needs to be on guard against the formation of slip-shod habits.

Slow and Rapid Reading.

3. In the foregoing pages it has been argued that literature has a place on the tongue and in the ear, and that it is a thing to be taught and studied. It now remains to consider it as a thing to be enjoyed. This point of view has, indeed, been assumed in the preceding discussion; but it is bound up with other considerations that are here to be presented.

Literature as a Source of Pleasure.

(1) The choice of literature for the schools must always take account of childish interests and childish powers. To attempt to force the interest too far is not only to invite failure, but to cultivate an unfortunate tedium and dislike for good literature. Pupils must be led on by gentle steps from the easy to the more difficult, and from the cheap to the precious. The boy whose palate is depraved to the "penny dreadful" will find Wordsworth stupid; but he may find Cooper and Stevenson a good transition to Scott and Homer, and thence to literature more subjective and contemplative.

Choose what is Enjoyable.

(2) The study and the teaching must have pleasure as well

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[1] See an article on "The Pace in Reading," ATLANTIC MONTHLY, June, 1902.

as profit in view: pleasure of the intellect and pleasure of the emotions. Good teaching of literature will increase week by week the child's storehouse of agreeable memories; will give him a private theatre wherein are enacted stirring scenes, where sweet and wise voices are heard, and where he can feel that he is living a fuller and finer life.

Make the Literature a Permanent Source of Pleasure.

(3) The school reading should be only an introduction to the world of books. Encourage home reading; find time to have the children talk of what they have read; suggest new poems and new stories in connection with what has already been read in school or out; have books about the school-room to tempt them to read, and strengthen the temptation by reading choice bits to them; strike an alliance with the public libraries: the custodians of the library are, in general, more than willing to oblige the teachers and the children. Where public libraries do not exist, a school library may be gradually formed at small cost: one excellent plan is to begin with "grade libraries," each grade of the school gradually building up by voluntary contributions a library for itself, leaving it for the next group of children, and, in turn, passing into its inheritance from the grade above. From such a series of nuclei, growing by the stimulus of immediate interest and possession, might be formed, in a few years and at little cost, a good school library.

Collateral Reading; Use of Libraries.

In the discussion of the problems arising in the teaching of literature, it remains to consider the form and extent of the units to be presented. We have seen the passing of the supremacy of the school reader and the introduction of the classics into the school. The views of the late Mr. Scudder express the spirit of this important movement:[1]—

Complete Classics vs. School Readers.

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[1] *Literature in the Schools*, by H. E. Scudder, Boston, 1888. See also Superintendent Maxwell in THE NEW YORK TEACHERS' MONOGRAPH, New York, November, 1898.

"The real point of practical reform, however, is not in the preference of American authors to English, but in the careful concentration of the minds of boys and girls upon standard American literature, in opposition to a dissipation over a desultory and mechanical acquaintance with scraps from a variety of sources, good, bad, and indifferent. In my paper on *Nursery Classics in School*, I argued that there is a true economy in substituting the great books of that portion of the world's literature which represents the childhood of the world's mind for the thin, quickly forgotten, feeble imaginations of insignificant bookmakers. There is an equally noble economy in engaging the child's mind, when it is passing out of an immature state into one of rational, intelligent appropriation of literature, upon such carefully chosen classic work as shall invigorate and deepen it. There is plenty of vagrancy in reading; the public libraries and cheap papers are abundantly able to satisfy the truant; but it ought to be recognized once for all that the schools are to train the mind into appreciation of literature, not to amuse it with idle diversion; to this end, the simplest and most direct method is to place before boys and girls for their regular task in reading, not scraps from this and that author, duly paragraphed and numbered, but a wisely selected series of works by men whom their country honours, and who have made their country worth living in.

"The continuous reading of a classic is in itself a liberal education; the fragmentary reading of commonplace lessons in minor morals, such as make up much of our reading-books, is a pitiful waste of growing mental powers. Even were our reading-books composed of choice selections from the highest literature, they would still miss the very great advantage which follows upon the steady growth of acquaintance with a sustained piece of literary art. I do not insist, of course, that *Evangeline* should be read at one session of the school, though it would be exceedingly helpful in training the powers of the mind if, after this poem had been read day by day for a few weeks, it were to be taken up first in its separate thirds, and then in an entire reading. What I claim is that the boy or girl who has read *Evangeline* through steadily has acquired a certain power in appropriating literature which is not to be had by reading a collection of minor poems, — the power of long-sustained attention and interest.

"If we could substitute a full course of reading from the great

American authors for a course in any existing graded series of readers, we should gain a further advantage in teaching children literature without frightening them with the vast spectre of literature. Molière's doctor[1] spoke prose all his life without discovering it, and children taught to read literature may escape the haunting sense that there is a serious, vague study known as literature, which has hand-books and manuals, and vast dictionaries, and cyclopædias, and Heaven knows what mountains shutting it out from the view of ordinary mortals. There is a deal of mischief in teaching young people about literature and perhaps giving them occasional specimens, but all the while keeping them at a distance from the real thing."

With Mr. Scudder's views as to the value of the complete classic over the unrelated fragment skilful teachers have no difference. The previous discussions of the treatment of the literature as an organic unity are based upon the assumption that entire compositions are read. It still remains, however, to be pointed out: —

(1) That there are many authors whose good things are so small and so few that they cannot well be supplied apart from the school reader;[2]

(2) That many of the good things here meant are a part of the common property of even the imperfectly educated, and that to omit them is to cut the child off from a part of the common literary heritage;

(3) That many authors whose work in general is of high value have written but little that is suitable for the lower grades;

(4) That there are selections from longer works, scenes from Scott, Dickens, Shakspere; lyrics from Shelley, Browning, and the dramatists: selections, indeed, from many of the larger works which the children can appreciate long before they can read the whole composition;

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[1] The reader will note the error in the allusion.

[2] It may be added that many good things may be culled from works which can never be rated as classics good enough to read entire.

(5) That often the best introduction to a classic is some well-chosen selection; and

(6) That many fragments from the greater works, while they may lose something by absence from their setting, yet, like the songs from *Pippa Passes* and *The Princess* have in themselves sufficient organic unity to be appreciated apart from their context.

In sum, the argument seems to lead to the conclusion that there is a place in the school for both the classic and the school reader.

CHAPTER III

ENGLISH IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Part I. — Language

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English a Single Subject.

NOTHING has so impeded the proper development of a thorough secondary course in English as the traditional system of breaking up the subject into a considerable number of smaller divisions, the mutual relation of which is far from obvious. The old secondary curriculum included elocution, oratory, grammar, composition, rhetoric, the study of certain works of literature, the history of English literature, versification, — not to mention "word study," "bad English," and perhaps other matters. Indeed, the fact that there is one broad field, one single subject, English, which can be treated in the high school in a consecutive and systematic way, was long unknown, and is even now not often understood or appreciated. Nor, when this essential premise is accepted, is it easy to agree on the relation of part

to part in the whole process of training which we include under the general term. It is, however, growing yearly more clear that no *one* kind of instruction in English can be effective that is not planned with an understanding of the aim of *all* instruction in English.

Secondary instruction in English has been dominated, during the nineteenth century, by three successive ideals, each of which has thrown stress on a special and separate part of the whole subject. The first ideal, grammatical correctness, was that of Lindley Murray, Noah Webster, and their contemporaries, whose one aim was that the pupil should understand the syntactical laws of the language and should have skill in the logical analysis of sentences and phrases. Half a century or more of teaching in which the emphasis was laid on these topics alone led to a sharp reaction of feeling, which tended to underestimate the benefits derived from the proper study of English grammar. The second ideal was rhetorical correctness, and the period in which it was dominant may be roughly reckoned as beginning with the Harvard entrance requirements in English in 1874. For nearly twenty years thereafter, the stress in secondary instruction was largely thrown on clearness and accuracy of written expression, to which the knowledge of English grammar was regarded as wholly subordinate. The third ideal, that now rapidly coming into prominence, is that of familiarity with and appreciation of English literature. It was first evident in high school instruction between 1885 and 1890, in the form of a growing feeling that more attention should be devoted to English literature, without undue neglect of either grammar or rhetoric, and was first recognized by the colleges in the Yale entrance requirements of 1894, and the uniform entrance requirements adopted in the same year.

Three Points of View.

The rapidly widening outlook of teachers has led to the building up of an ideal more stable than any of those mentioned, — the ideal of a well-balanced course of instruction in the language and literature of the mother-tongue. What the essentials of such a course are, we

The Essential Elements.

have already considered in the opening chapter. We agreed that the mastery of the mother-tongue involved three elements: (1) the ability of the individual to understand the thoughts of others, whether spoken or written; (2) his ability to express his own thoughts adequately through spoken or written words; and (3) his ability to gain pleasure and profit through his native literature. We also pointed out that instruction in effective expression involved training in grammar and rhetoric, as well as practice in composition; that instruction in effective oral expression involved these also, and, in addition, elocution and practice in speaking; and that the development of the power to appreciate literature involves, not only the reading of literature with that object in view, but some knowledge of the history of literature, a familiar acquaintance with a certain number of literary masterpieces of various epochs, and a realization of the characteristic traits of the race or the nation which are revealed in its literature.

With these three essential elements or aims of instruction clearly in mind, we can now take up in detail such points regarding the matter or method of instruction as are most in need of discussion, under the general heads of language and literature.

I. Language: Grammar

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What is the Aim of Grammar?

The old theory was that grammar inculcated correctness by teaching the laws that rule language. Such a doctrine was the natural outcome of the study of the classical languages, in which concord plays so large a part in syntactical relations: to be ignorant of the real basis of agreement was, in Latin and Greek, to be ignorant of the real basis of the literary language. Two other circumstances united to aid the association of grammar with correctness. First, the prevailing attitude toward language in France and England, during the eighteenth century and during the early part of the nineteenth century, was highly rational and philosophic, not to say metaphysical. Language was supposed (erroneously, of course) to follow the laws of logic and reason.[1] Second, the difference between the forms of language spoken by people in various parts of the same country was at that time even greater than it is now. In France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and even in England, the spoken language of great masses of people differed radically in many points of inflection and syntax from that spoken by other large groups of people, and all differed in many important particulars from the written, literary, or "standard" language. Only those who knew the inflectional and syntactical laws sanctioned by grammar, which was based on the literary language, could speak or write "correctly."

The Modern Theory.

As time went on, however, marked changes appeared in the attitude taken toward grammar both by investigators and by teachers. First, it became clear that the teaching of the rules of grammar, particularly in the mechanical way then in vogue, scarcely produced the result desired.

[1] The movement began with the Port-Royal *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* (1660), and is very fully and interestingly described in Petit de Julleville, *Histoire de la Langue et Littérature française*, V. 723 ff. and VI. 821 ff.

Children learned the rules, recited them glibly, but did not thus acquire the habit of employing the usages sanctioned by the literary language.[1] It was plain rule-grammar did not suffice to produce correctness in speech, any more than rule-arithmetic produced real skill in calculating. One might speak correctly without a knowledge of the rules; even with the knowledge of the rules one might speak incorrectly. Second, it has become evident that, of all the modern European languages, English is the one to which the old laws of concord apply least, owing to the fact that we have so few inflections.[2] Third, with the development of modern philology, the attitude of investigators toward language has greatly changed. They no longer deem themselves arbiters of speech, but simply recorders of usage, humble searchers for the hidden laws that seem to guide language. They no longer despise dialects or deal exclusively with the literary language. What their task is, and what, from the scientific point of view, grammar has become, is well stated by Professor Whitney, in the preface to his *Essentials of English Grammar* (1870): —

"That the leading object of the study of English grammar is to teach the correct use of English, is, in my view, an error, and one which is gradually becoming removed, giving way to the sounder opinion that grammar is a reflective study of language, for a variety of purposes, of which correctness is only one, and a secondary or subordinate one, — by no means unimportant,

[1] The correcting of "bad English" was long a part of the course in grammar. Driven thence; it took refuge under the wing of rhetoric. The main objection to the frequent use of this form of exercise is that it seems to throw the emphasis on incorrect expressions and to tend to make the pupil familiar with them rather than with the correct forms. To the use of the exercise from time to time there can be no real objection, especially in the case of pupils who are already too familiar with the incorrect forms, provided that the specimens are really normal "bad English."

[2] See, for a popular statement of the facts, R. G. White's chapter on the "Grammarless Tongue" in *Words and their Uses*, and, for a more scientific statement, O. Jespersen, *Progress in Language, with Special Reference to English*, Macmillan, 1894.

but best attained indirectly. It should be a pervading element in the whole school and home training of the young, to make them use their own tongue with accuracy and force; and, along with any special drilling directed to this end, some of the rudimentary distinctions and rules of grammar are conveniently taught; but that is not the study of grammar, and it will not bear the intrusion of much formal grammar without being spoiled for its own ends. It is constant use and practice, under never-failing watch and correction, that makes good writers and speakers; the appreciation of direct authority is the most efficient corrective. Grammar has its part to contribute, but rather in the higher than in the lower stages of the work. One must be a somewhat reflective user of language to amend even here and there a point by grammatical reasons; and no one ever changed from a bad speaker to a good one by applying the rules of grammar to what he said. To teach English grammar to an English speaker is, as it seems to me, to take advantage of the fact that the pupil knows the facts of the language, in order to turn his attention to the underlying principles and relations, to the philosophy of language as illustrated in his own use of it, in a more effective manner than is otherwise possible."

The Present Status.

In England, France, and Germany, where the schools must often struggle to give to pupils speaking a dialect a clear idea of the usages of the literary language, the chief aim of grammar is still generally thought to be the inculcating of syntactical and inflectional "correctness." In parts of the United States where the foreign element is strongest, the same may properly be the case. As a rule, however, we have come to depend, for the purpose of teaching "correctness," largely on the now greatly increased instruction in composition and in literature, and to look upon grammar as a means both for giving the young some knowledge of the facts of language and for thus training them in the analysis and structure of sentences.

The history of the teaching of grammar in Germany, France, England, and the United States seems in the main to have been the same. The grammarians who aimed at correctness by rule were in the ascendancy in the eighteenth century and

in the early part of the nineteenth. They were, as we have previously pointed out, the successors of the old grammarians of the Latin tongue, accustomed only to mechanical methods of dealing with the facts of a dead language, known to them almost entirely in its somewhat artificial literary form. This school was represented in England and the United States by Lindley Murray. It was followed by what might be called the logical or metaphysical school, typified by Becker in Germany, and by many minor grammarians in France, England, and the United States.[1] Conceiving of language as based on reason and as the logical combination of certain parts of speech, each of which represented a sort of abstract entity, these writers improved on their predecessors by offering systems which had at least the merit of being logical, but which laboured under the disadvantage both of being often unsound and of being almost wholly beyond the actual comprehension of the young and immature.[2] The reaction, beginning in Germany with such scholars as Grimm, finally triumphed, and resulted for a while in a general prejudice against the older schools, in a widespread suspicion of the possibility of teaching grammar at all, — at least, of teaching anything but the bare and necessary facts of language.[3]

Shall Grammar be Taught?

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[1] On the French movement, see I. Carré, "L'Enseignement de la Langue française," in *Recueil des Monographies pédagogiques*, 1889, IV. 50–55.

[2] A good illustration is the old definition of the "potential" mood as "that form of a verb which expresses the power, liberty, possibility, or necessity of being, action, or passion."

[3] "Two generations ago the watchwords of the parties into which the educational world was divided were 'Grammar thorough and systematic' and 'No teaching of grammar in the schools.' On the one side were ranged men like Becker and Wurst, who declared, in Becker's words, that 'since the instruction in language is in its own nature theoretical, grammar, especially the grammar of the mother-tongue, should be the proper gymnastic school, in which the intellectual powers may be practised and developed.' Against them stood the famous philologist, Jacob Grimm, who urged that the natural unconscious growth of speech should not be stunted by 'the misconceived and misshapen rules of the pedant,' and protested that the emphasis laid on grammar tended 'to draw the

The reaction, however, was in its essence directed against the old system of teaching grammar, not against the teaching of grammar in itself, and systematic instruction in the inflections, syntax, and word-order of the native language is now generally accepted as a part of higher elementary or secondary education in all civilized countries.

The Main Objections to the Study of Grammar.

The main objections urged against the study of grammar are as follows : —

(1) The learning of a multitude of rules does not help the pupil to speak and write correctly.

(2) The philosophic distinctions of formal grammar are meaningless except to the advanced student.

(3) Exercises in the parsing and analysis of literature tend to give one a distaste both for literature and for grammar.

(4) The mental discipline supposed to be secured through the study of grammar may also be secured in other ways, as is shown by many scientific or business men, who, though without linguistic training, have been taught by observation and experience to think clearly and accurately.

(5) Whatever facts about the language are necessary for a broad education may be readily acquired through familiarity with good literature.

(6) Whatever knowledge of syntactical laws is necessary for information, for mental discipline, or linguistic training, can be more readily attained through the study of Latin.[1]

(7) English is a grammarless tongue.

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immature mind of the child to unfruitful abstractions and dry reflections.' His protest, though seconded by men of such influence as Wackernagel and Von Raumer, had little effect for twenty years. Then came the reaction in his favour and grammar has been deposed from the throne it once occupied." F. H. Dale, "The Teaching of the Mother Tongue."

[1] "And, finally, to the demand why, if boys must study language as a means of education, can they not study French and German, — the answer is, that the value of the classical tongues as means of education is in the very fact that they are dead, and that their structure is so remote from that of ours that to dismember their sentences and reconstruct them according to our own fashion of speaking is such an exercise of

"Government, and agreement, and apposition, and gender, have no place in the construction of the English sentence; tense is confined to the necessary distinction between what is passing, or may pass, and what has passed, and case, to the simple expression of possession. This being the condition of the English language, grammar, in the usual sense of the word, — *i. e.*, syntax according to etymology [better, on the basis of inflection], — is impossible, for inflected forms and the consequent relations of words are the conditions, *sine qua non*, of grammar. In speaking or writing English, we have only to choose the right words and put them into the right places, respecting no laws but those of reason, conforming to no order but that which we call 'logical.'"[1]

Objections Answered. In reply, it may be urged: —

(1) That we no longer attempt to teach correctness of expression by means of grammar.

(2) That only the simplest logical distinctions are attempted in the best modern teaching of grammar. The old "metaphysical" school is rapidly passing away, and there is little or nothing in recent good text-books that cannot be readily understood by a pupil of fifteen or sixteen.

(3) That the old system of multitudinous exercises in parsing and analysis is now discarded, or retained only in a sufficient degree to make sure that the pupil is capable of understanding the structure of the English sentence.

(4) That no one would deny that mental discipline can be secured in many ways, or that men learn to think accurately and hence to express themselves accurately and logically,

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perception, judgment, and memory, such a training in thought and in the use of language, as can be found in no other study or intellectual exertion of which immature and untrained persons of ordinary power are competent. To us of English race and speech this discipline is more severe, and therefore more valuable, than to any people of the [European] Continent, because of the greater distance, in this respect, between our own language than between any one of theirs and the Greek and Latin." R. G. White, *Words and their Uses*, Chapter IX., "Grammar, English, and Latin." See also H. Corson, *Claims of Literary Culture*, 1875.

[1] R. G. White, *Words and their Uses*, 324.

through the experiences of life. Grammar merely aids this process.

(5) That, although experience has shown that "correctness" is best attained, as a rule, through familiarity with the use of the "standard" language in conversation and in literature, experience also goes directly counter to the assumption that an adequate knowledge of the laws and principles of the language can be thus commonly acquired, without the help of formal or systematic grammar.

(6) That, although students may gain a knowledge of the syntactical laws of our language through the study of Latin, (*a*) not all pupils have the opportunity of studying Latin; (*b*) such a knowledge of English syntax is an almost indispensable preliminary to the study of Latin, as the complaints of experienced Latin teachers show; and (*c*) the whole system of Latin grammar is, in many respects, so different from that of English grammar that it seems absurd to learn by partial inference what might more easily be taught directly.

(7) That the well-known facts brought out by R. G. White and others do not show that English is a grammarless tongue, but only, so to speak, a concordless tongue. The objection holds good against the old conception of grammar, but has no weight against the modern conception of grammar.

It seems clear, then, on the whole, that the main objections to the study of grammar apply to it as taught by antiquated methods, or rather to antiquated conceptions of grammar. The general conclusion seems to be, on the part of the most thoughtful teachers, that high school pupils need, in some way or other, to be trained systematically in a knowledge of the important facts relating to inflection, syntax, sentence-structure, word-order, and word-composition, in their native language. This point of view, the resultant of several oscillating changes during the nineteenth century, is well expressed by Dr. Samuel Thurber: —

Summary.

"A certain amount of formal grammar, on the other hand, I consider extremely important. The distinction of subject

and predicate, which is fundamental to thought and speech, is comprehensible even to children younger than high school youth. The names themselves, like many other grammatical terms, are not merely technical, but belong to the vocabulary of educated persons. Intelligible and interesting to youth are the distinction of subject and object, the distinction of principal and subordinate elements, the meaning of noun, verb, and the parts of speech generally; of preposition, number, gender, and finally of case, tense, mode, relation, and government. . . . Tracing grammatical relations is a most excellent discipline, and the knowledge in which it issues is a most useful knowledge. Through parsing and analysis we gain facility in following the language, sometimes difficult and involved, of writers like Milton. No one can go far in Shakspere without noting the peculiarities of his grammar. And you cannot conceive a beginning of a study of a foreign language without perpetual consideration of grammatical topics. Therefore I recommend parsing and analysis, to occupy a certain quantulum of our precious English time. It will not hurt a pupil's appreciation to parse a little of *Paradise Lost*. The opinion we often hear expressed that to parse beautiful prose or verse blunts the æsthetic enjoyment of it as literature, I simply laugh at. The onslaught on grammar which culminated some years ago was a senseless panic. Of late I believe the educational world is recovering its wits."[1]

How shall Grammar be Taught?

The question now arises, How shall this information be presented to the pupil, how shall grammar be taught? In discussing this question it is fair to admit at once that the pupil cannot be left wholly to himself to "pick up" the separate facts referred to and to generalize regarding them. Under such circumstances, experience shows that he would only rarely acquire the necessary information. Nor, as we have seen, can we depend exclusively on the teacher of Latin or of some modern foreign language to present certain facts or laws connected with the foreign language, which the pupil can by inference apply to his own lan-

[1] "English in Secondary Schools: Some Consideration as to its Aims and Needs," in SCHOOL REVIEW, II. 468, 540.

guage, for it is just this preliminary information as to his own language which he needs to use in acquiring a systematic knowledge of the foreign language. It may also be regarded as generally admitted that the pupil shall have learned progressively, from the fourth grade of the elementary school up, many of the chief facts relating to the inflection and syntax of English. It is clear, then, that the information we have described is already partly given him, in the main, by the teacher of English, and that it must now be given him *systematically*. The question under discussion, therefore, is, Shall grammar be taught in the high school deductively, as it is usually taught in the United States and England; inductively, as is the custom in Germany; or by both methods?

The Deductive Method.

The time-honoured deductive method of teaching grammar in the United States and England is well illustrated by the text-books of Mason, widely used in England, and of Whitney, widely used in the United States. The order of procedure in each is definition, example, application. The pupil first learns the definition, for example, of a noun; then notices examples of nouns; then applies his knowledge to exercises in picking out nouns from among other words.[1]

The Inductive Method.

In Germany, where text-books in grammar are little used, the method is almost invariably inductive. In Prussia the law is that "grammatical instruction must be limited to what is strictly necessary, and must always rest on definite examples. German grammar must no longer be treated in the same way as the grammar of foreign languages."[2] The method is thus further explained by Mr. Dale: —

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[1] Both books stand for the method most in use during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Other books differ from this point of view only in giving less emphasis to application, and more to definition and example.

[2] "Curricula and Programmes of Work for Higher Schools in Prussia."

"An instance of construction is found in some piece that the class is learning; the sentence is written on the blackboard, and the boys look for more examples of the same kind. Under the questioning of the teacher, and by comparison of the instances, they gradually elicit the rule, which, after being repeated, is written down in a note-book with a model sentence. Their next piece of composition is then so planned as to involve the use of the construction already learned. Thus the two steps on which emphasis are laid are: (1) that the instance selected should always be one appealing to the children by its content; and (2) that the rule should never be given but always found, and when found, embodied in a concrete sentence again. Abstract and universal statements are, as far as possible, kept in the background."[1]

Objections to either Extreme.

Either extreme seems equally absurd. To teach grammar by a set of generalizations destroys, to a considerable degree, the value of the training, though no more than would the same method when employed in any other subject. The pupil tends to learn by rote, to see only what he is told to see; he does not gain the power of observing and generalizing for himself on linguistic matters; he conceives of grammar as a more or less formal philosophy which has little or nothing to do with the actual processes of language as they reveal themselves in conversation, in composition, or in literature. On the other hand, the German method is wasteful of time and effort. Why devote hour after hour to the discovery by induction of laws that can be easily stated, explained, and remembered, and to the laborious writing out in exercise-books of generalizations which can be found recorded in any elementary text-book?[2]

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[1] F. H. Dale, "The Teaching of the Mother Tongue in Germany."

[2] The wastefulness of the method in this respect reminds one of the solemn farce of the late Professor Zupitza's lectures on the elements of Anglo-Saxon. One of the great scholars of his time, he deliberately chose to spend weeks in dictating to a large class of apparently earnest students facts that any sensible person could find in a good text-book

The special advantage of the German system is that it allows the continual exercise of the student on grammatical principles throughout the whole course. Grammar is thus not the task of a single term or a single year, but of many years. It is kept steadily in mind during the pupil's entire secondary training, and, though rarely or never appearing alone as a separate subject, it is a constant factor in the work in composition and in literature. The disadvantage of the system lies wholly in its cumbrousness. It seems plain, therefore, that American teachers, dealing with a language which is fortunately far less complicated in its grammar than German, will find it wise to retain their custom of making grammar, for a year or a part of a year, a separate subject of systematic study, and to adopt the German custom of connecting the incidental study of grammar with all composition and literature throughout the course.

The Just Mean.

In schools where, owing to local causes of one sort or another, a large proportion of the pupils are children of foreign immigrants or come from families of the unintelligent class, it may often be necessary, in teaching grammar, to return to primitive methods, and to regard the study as a special instrument for securing syntactical correctness. In such cases emphasis will be thrown on the accurate knowledge of the inflectional system and the few laws of concord, and abundant exercises are desirable. Where, however, as will normally be the case throughout the United States, pupils are fairly well accustomed to the use of good English in point of syntax and inflection, the emphasis of the course should be laid on the analysis and structure of the sentence. The facts of inflection and syntax can be quickly learned. The essential thing is that the pupil shall be able to separate any ordinary English sentence into its

Essential Parts of Grammar.

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and commit to memory at his convenience. What we craved, in such university lectures, was the comments and explanations of a great scholar; what we received was largely a mass of comparatively trivial facts, easily obtainable elsewhere, but none the less written down with trustful solemnity by the spectacled band of novices.

component parts and to state the relation of each to the others. The boy who once learns this simple process can never forget it, for it becomes immediately the first guiding principle in the understanding of all that he reads and in the composition of all that he says or writes.

Plan of Instruction.

The older method was to begin the study of systematic grammar with the classification of words. Each part of speech was then taken up separately, its inflections (if any) described, the sub-classifications indicated, and a method given for parsing each type of word. Having thus mastered the preliminary data, the pupil was taught how words could be combined into phrases and clauses, and how, either separately or in these group-forms, he could build up sentences of various degrees of complexity. He was thus prepared for the analysis of sentences. Nowadays the pupil usually has learned, in the various stages of elementary instruction, to distinguish several of the parts of speech and to recognize the subject and the predicate in easy sentences. The method of systematic instruction may, under such circumstances, be somewhat modified. It is possible, after a brief survey of the parts of speech, to begin immediately the work on analysis, returning later to the more careful consideration of the parts of speech.

The point at issue, whether any considerable treatment of the larger unit (the sentence) is of advantage until the pupil has mastered the details relating to the smaller unit (the word), is precisely analogous to the similar point often raised in connection with the teaching of systematic rhetoric, whether it is advantageous to take up the paragraph before studying the structure of the sentence. In the case of grammar, it is clear that the interest of the student will be stimulated, and his appreciation of the real purpose of his work heightened, by some work on the sentence as early as possible in the course, although we think it wiser to postpone the thorough consideration of the sentence until the pupil is familiar with the details of classification, inflection, syntax, and the analysis of phrases.

Many just objections have been brought against the old system of parsing: —

(1) Parsing was carried to such an extreme, especially in connection with certain classics, that it killed all appreciation of them as literature. **Parsing.**

(2) Too much stress was laid on concord. English adjectives were said to *agree* with their nouns, for instance, after the fashion of the Latin grammarians.[1]

(3) Parsing fostered the un-English idea that each word was somehow created as one or another part of speech, instead of being, as is often the case, a symbol sometimes capable of several uses under several sets of circumstances.

The modern ideas about parsing, on the other hand, are: —

(1) That the exercise should be used only as a drill preliminary to analysis. The pupil needs to be trained in the statement of the relations of single words to each other until he is sufficiently familiar with these relations to recognize them instinctively. He is then ready to go on with the more complex task of separating sentences into their component phrases and clauses. Into this work parsing need not enter to any considerable extent.

(2) That parsing should be made as simple as possible. The pupil should not be asked to indicate agreement when agreement does not actually exist, and, after he has once learned to recognize the case, number, voice, mood, or tense of words, it is scarcely necessary for him to continue indicating them in parsing, unless occasionally for purposes of review. Parsing thus reduces itself to (*a*) a statement of the class of words to which the word in question belongs, and (*b*) a statement of its function in the sentence.

(3) That parsing should be made as little as possible of a mechanical exercise. There is danger that pupils may catch, so to speak, the knack of parsing, following some routine

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[1] The best statement of the absurdities of "agreement" is that before referred to, the chapter "A Grammarless Tongue," in R. G. White's *Words and their Uses.*

method, and developing a strange faculty for stating, after this fashion, linguistic relations which they do not really recognize.

Parsing and Analysis.

If parsing be thus shorn of its useless attachments of "agreement" and other non-existent relations, it practically reduces itself to analysis on a smaller scale. We parse when we show by the form or position of a word that it bears a certain relation to other words. Parsing we usually apply to separate words, and we associate with it the attempt to indicate minute details of sentence structure, though of course the parsing of a noun or a verb may at any time lead us to the fundamental analysis of a sentence. Best employed as a preliminary exercise, it assists the pupil in developing the power to recognize at once the relation of one word to another in any group of words which he can without difficulty hold in his mind as a unit. Analysis we usually associate with the dissection of long or intricate sentences into their component parts, feeling that when this larger analysis is accomplished we shall have little difficulty in applying the smaller process of analysis which we call parsing.

With regard to analysis teachers are generally agreed: —

(1) That the process should be made as simple as possible.

(2) That it should, so far as possible, be done without the help of diagrams. The aim of the exercise is that the pupil should gain the power, possessed by all educated people, of recognizing, as he reads, the relation that the parts of a sentence bear to each other. The use of the diagram is not an end in itself, but merely a possible stage in the process. The intelligent pupil may not need it at all, and, if a class can be trained in analysis without requiring the diagram for purposes of understanding, it seems wrong to force upon it the use of the diagram simply for the convenience of the teacher. It would appear wise, then, (*a*) not to use diagrams unless necessary; and (*b*) if they are necessary, to discard them as soon as possible after they have served their purpose, substituting the

Analysis and the Diagram.

oral or written statement of the pupil as to the main facts of structure.[1]

(3) That, if a system of diagrams be used, it should be a very simple one.

(4) That pains should be taken that the pupil does not acquire facility in making diagrams as a mechanical process without actually acquiring the power of intelligent analysis. This result may often be best attained by having the pupil use several systems of diagrams, inventing or adapting them as graphical methods of expressing grammatical relations.

Latin-English Grammar.

On no point does the teacher of English grammar need more to stand on his guard than in the matter of looking at English sentences with Latin eyes. For centuries the makers of text-books of English grammar have been men trained in highly inflected classical languages, wholly different from English in form, method, and spirit. The consequence has been that until very recent years we have been treating English as if it were Latin or Greek. Even now many teachers do not realize, so great is the hold of tradition, that English nouns rarely have gender and can scarcely be said to have more than two cases, that pure adjectives never "agree" with their substantives, and that verbs rarely "agree" with their subjects. It seems wise to do away, so far as possible, with all distinctions that apply to other languages but not to ours, and resolutely to set ourselves to look at our own language in the light of fact.[2]

Grammar Taught Historically.

One of the most striking achievements of the nineteenth century has been the conquest by scholars of the data relating to the development of the modern languages, — a conquest scientific in method, but romantic in the passionate devotion shown by generations of tireless investigators. It is now possible for the trained mind

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[1] After all, the best clue as to whether a pupil can analyze a sentence is often whether he can read it aloud intelligently and with proper emphasis.

[2] Perhaps the greatest aid that can be secured from treatises in this process will be obtained from H. Sweet's *A New English Grammar*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2 vols., 1892 and 1898.

to grasp the whole sequence of changes through which English words have passed before reaching their present forms and relations, just as it is possible for the well-trained mind to grasp the changes of form and structure by which the horse, the magnificent animal of to-day, has been developed from the odd little five-toed beast of the Eocene era. Fresh from such linguistic researches, it is only natural that ardent philologists have been eager to teach the grammar of Modern English by showing the evolution of the modern tongue through Early English and Middle English. The best plea for this method is that made by Prof. Mark Liddell, who says: —

"We have in English historical grammar a subject that is scientific, practical, and of great educational value, and, moreover, a subject which can be taught in an elementary way to young students, and can at the same time furnish a field for original scientific work in university teaching. Why should it not be easily possible to put it in the place that dogmatic grammar used to occupy? Why is it necessary to wait until a student is nearly through with a university course to give him a scientific view of the machinery he thinks with? It would not be difficult to teach anybody to read Old English at the time when he begins to read Latin, to continue the work by teaching him to read Middle English, and then to put upon this elementary work, which need only be such as will give him the power roughly to read his own language in any period in its history, a more or less thorough training in English historical grammar. It is not necessary to make him speak Old English or Middle English, or even to seek native idioms in his own use of language. But surely a student with an accurate and correct knowledge of what his language is will be able to use it with more ease and power than one without such knowledge."[1]

Objections.

Strong as this plea is, there are two even stronger objections to be urged against it. First, the plan is not well adapted to secondary education. To study the modern language through its earlier forms would involve the work of several years. Not one high school student in ten,

[1] "English Historical Grammar," ATLANTIC MONTHLY, July, 1898.

perhaps not one in a hundred, would be justified in the expenditure of time and effort required. The method is, at best, adapted only to college instruction. Second, even if the system could be adopted in high schools, it is doubtful whether it would be advisable on the basis of sane educational theory and practice. The palæontologist, and perhaps the expert veterinary surgeon, should perhaps know the evolution of the horse, but the actual user of the horse, the driver, has no need of such knowledge. His training must come through the practical handling of the present-day animal under diverse circumstances, and from such an understanding of his main characteristics and capabilities as shall spring from simple theory and wide experience. English grammar, the group of facts and principles that has to do with our handling of the present language, is self-explanatory, self-determining, regulated by the feelings, associations, and practices of to-day, without regard to its ancestry. To follow its evolution is highly interesting to the professed student of language, but not of great importance to the people at large.[1]

Divided Usage in Grammar.

As has been pointed out, the modern grammarian feels that he has little to do, under ordinary circumstances, with "correctness," or with the reasonableness or logic of given expressions. We no longer consider it our duty to condemn "had rather" because it cannot be parsed under such and such rules, and to set up "would rather" as a more logical phrase. On the contrary, we treat "had rather" as an existing fact, — a fact to be explained or classified, if necessary, but not to be changed. The first and greatest principle of modern grammar is that the standard of our language is the usage of intelligent and educated English-speaking people, and that the business of modern grammar is to record

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[1] This paragraph is to be understood as applying only to the historical method of teaching modern English grammar, and not to the incidental use of appropriate historical information in the course of instruction in systematic modern grammar, nor as applying to the possible study of historical English grammar, or of Old or Middle English, during the last year of the high school.

and classify that usage, so far as regards the inflectional forms of words and the relation that words bear to one another when used in sentences. It is the custom of intelligent and educated English-speaking people to say, "*he* struck *me*" and "*I* struck *him*," and the laws of pronominal inflection are based on these typical facts. If, however, in some inconceivable fashion, the users of the language should come to drop all distinction between *I* and *me* and *he* and *him*, as they have dropped the old distinction between *ye* and *you*, and should say "*him* struck *me*" and "*me* struck *him*," then grammar would simply change its generalizations about pronominal inflection. "Reason," in the formal or logical sense, does not enter into the question at all. Now, there are a few grammatical points on which the practice of intelligent speakers and writers differ, as, for instance, the much discussed question of the split infinitive. At first the users of the new form were so few that the grammarians ignored them; then, as their number grew, the scientific grammarians called attention to the apparent anomaly, usually expressing their regret at the turn affairs were taking; finally, as the number increased very considerably, the scientific grammarians felt bound to restate their previous deduction in such a way as to cover both forms of expression. These double forms of expression — another good example of which is "all *but I* went" and "all *but me* went" — are now generally known as instances of divided usage.

Its Place in Instruction.

With regard to the place to be given to the double forms of expression in the teaching of English grammar, there are three opinions. One body of teachers, especially those giving to grammar a sort of "verbal inspiration," think that divided usage should be wholly excluded. One form must be right, they would say, and another wrong. A second class, more scientific in its attitude, would acknowledge the position held by divided use in an ideal statement of English grammar, but would prefer to ignore it as much as possible, lest pupils should be puzzled and confused. A third would be inclined to give cases of divided usage, under ordinary circumstances, a certain prominence, that pupils might

get the greater insight into the nature of language and of linguistic laws. I am disposed to favor the opinion last mentioned. It must be remarked, however, that —

(1) This does not mean that the teacher should sanction what he conceives to be unwarrantable license in usage. After showing, for example, that there are two ways of placing the adverbial modifier of the infinitive, he may with perfect propriety explain why he regards one way as far less desirable than the other.

(2) Nor does it mean that pupils should necessarily be allowed their choice in such cases, though I believe that would be the wiser plan. The instructor may announce, after an explanation of the facts, that, for purposes of uniformity, one of the two forms will be regarded as the standard form in that class, precisely as a principal may with propriety announce that, for the sake of uniformity, *traveller*, *traveler*, and similar words should in that school regularly be spelled in one way and not in the other.

(3) On no point is personal feeling more likely to be aroused than on questions of divided usage, and on no point is discussion likely to be less satisfactory unless carried on in the most impersonal and scientific fashion. Whenever anybody seems inclined to lose his temper, the treatment of such matters had better be immediately postponed or dismissed once for all.

So much for the basis, aim, and method of the instruction in formal grammar. But where shall the course be placed? Some favour the last years of the elementary school, with a review towards the end of the high school course; others, the first year of the high school. The solution seems to depend upon circumstances rather than upon theory. In favoured communities, where literary traditions are strong, the gradual inductive study of grammar may properly be supplemented in the seventh or eighth grade by the systematic study, which need not be again taken up until late in the high school course, if at all. The supplementary study of grammar, of which we shall speak in the next paragraph, can be relied on to keep the principles of

The Time to Teach Grammar.

the subject fresh in the pupil's mind. On the other hand, experience shows that, taking the country as a whole, not many children enter the high school with what may be called a sufficient working knowledge of systematic grammar, and it would seem clear that in most cases the time in the elementary schools could have been more wisely spent on literature and composition and the inductive study of grammar in connection with them. Pupils entering the high school without a good working knowledge of English grammar should certainly be put at once to work on it, for it is the essential preliminary to all high school work in English as well as in other languages. Under favourable circumstances, and with a skilled and judicious teacher, the course may be completed in half a year. Except in extraordinary cases it should be completed in a year.

Supplementary Work in Grammar.

When the course of formal instruction in systematic grammar stops, it is a grave mistake, I believe, to allow the subject to drop entirely from the pupil's mind: first, because he must keep fresh such knowledge as he has, and, second, because he has much more to learn. As a matter of fact, however, American practice is weak in this respect, encouraging the student, in effect, to discontinue his efforts just when his need of grammar is greatest and when its connection with his work in composition and literature is most evident and important.

So far as rhetoric and composition are concerned, the points most to be kept in mind in this supplementary work seem to be as follows: —

(1) All errors in grammar should be corrected at once and with emphasis. There are, indeed, few that a pupil could make, after the thorough preliminary training which the second high school year presupposes, unless he has been unfortunate in his home influences or has some other tongue than English as his native speech. Pupils who, at this stage in their education, seem to have anything like a habit of ungrammatical expression need further special training.

(2) The ability to make a clear-cut, well-proportioned English sentence depends primarily upon the grammatical

instinct, — upon a keen sense of the relations which words or groups of words bear to each other. The teacher, therefore, will often find that pupils whose sentences are ungainly and sprawling are in need of further drill in grammar, and can with profit be put to analyzing their own sentences and, under proper direction, to rearranging the various elements in them.

With the study of literature, which should be pursued consecutively throughout the high school course, this supplementary teaching of grammar has even closer connections: —

(1) Whenever there seems to be the slightest doubt, especially in the work of the first and second years, that the pupil does not understand the meaning of a sentence, the teacher's first duty — unless the failure to grasp the thought comes from ignorance of the meaning of the words — should be to make sure that the pupil can analyze the sentence, so as to recognize its essential elements and their grammatical relations. When this has been done, it will often be found that the pupil's difficulty has been solved.

(2) During the literature work of the first and second years it is wise to require, during each recitation, the oral analysis of at least one sentence and the parsing of several words. In this respect the study of English literature should differ only in degree from the study of the Greek and Latin classics. In his reading of Homer and Virgil the pupil is constantly alive not only to the fact that his knowledge of grammar is helping him to understand what he reads, but to the much more impressive fact that his instructor is likely at any point to test his understanding of the text by pertinent grammatical questions. It would be rash to carry this method too far in the study of English literature, lest, as is very often the sad case with Homer and Virgil, the content be neglected for the outward form; but it is certainly wise not to allow the pupil to lose sight, in his study of English literature, of the grammatical construction until it has become second nature with him to recognize it as he reads.

(3) So far the supplementary teaching of grammar has been used only for purposes of review. It can also be em-

ployed to give the pupil fresh knowledge. He can learn through it — in connection with his reading and under the direction of his teacher — all the more minute details of systematic grammar, with which it is useless to surcharge the memory during the course of formal instruction. Such, for example, are the various anomalies of plural-making and the few other oddities of the scant system of English inflection, the shades of meaning indicated by the subjunctive, and, above all else, the laws of *shall* and *will* as used in literary English. The intricate set of idioms just mentioned cannot easily be learned by rote. In his formal study of grammar and rhetoric the pupil may come to understand the principles involved, but unless he has been familiar from childhood with the distinctions he will not thus learn to apply them. His only chance, therefore, of mastering this baffling shibboleth of English speech lies in his drill in composition and his work in literature. Through these, even if he does not learn invariably to distinguish in his own speech between *shall* and *will*, he can at least be preserved from the shame of not being able to recognize the finer shades of meaning in his own language which these two words often indicate.

Etymology.

Etymology or word-composition was once a conspicuous part of formal grammar, and hapless youths were forced to learn lists of meaningless prefixes and suffixes from the Latin, Greek, and Anglo-Saxon. But such days are past or are rapidly passing. We still recognize the desirability of giving the pupil information on these subjects, but we prefer to do it incidentally rather than systematically. It would, indeed, be possible, if all high school children should be obliged to study Latin, to base on the elements of that study a short systematic course on the Latin side of etymology. As it is, the case of a formal and elaborate course in etymology is hopeless, for, to understand what they were doing, pupils should have some knowledge of both Latin and Anglo-Saxon, whereas few are acquainted with the first and none with the second. Much, however, may be accomplished by a method which is by no means unsystematic, but can scarcely be called

formal or deductive; we refer to the same process of incidental or supplementary teaching which proves of so much value in connection with the study of systematic grammar. Early in the high school course the teacher should find occasion to point out such Latin prefixes as *trans* or *post*, perhaps allowing the class to gain this meaning by induction from their use in English words; other common prefixes or suffixes, whether of Latin, Greek, or Old English origin, should in successive days be taken up, until the class has, within the course of several weeks, thus learned all the common prefixes, and suffixes, of whatever origin. For the first year this work would probably be sufficient, so far as etymology goes, though the instructor should often call attention to the history of English words, as they occur in the study of various masterpieces, and to notable changes of meaning. In the second, third, and fourth years, when some of the pupils are studying Latin or Greek or both, and some French or German, the time is ripe for the incidental study of the Greek, Latin, French, and Old English elements in English words, for the tracing of the history of queer words, or words that have had strange fortunes, and for interesting talks on the history of the language, its remarkable characteristics, and the nature and composition of its vocabulary. The whole forms one of the most stimulating and valuable sides of English instruction, but it is impossible to lay down rules or principles for the guidance of the novice. Nothing but real learning will enable the teacher to give his pupil sound facts; nothing but real skill, born of practice and forethought, will enable him to present the facts at the time and in the way that will alone cause them to be appreciated and remembered.[1]

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[1] It is to be hoped that text-books will be prepared which shall place pertinent information of this sort at the disposition of the teacher who is untrained in philology. An excellent beginning is made in J. M. Anderson's *A Study of English Words*, American Book Company, 1897, which will serve as a guide to the general character of the matter described above. Trench's *English Past and Present* and *On the Study of Words* long were of great value in this regard, and were the main source of cur-

Prosody, or the theory of versification, was originally treated as a part of systematic grammar, though usually in a perfunctory fashion and according to a false system. In more recent years it does not seem often to be treated at all, and the ignorance of the subject among young people is simply appalling. It is not ignorance of technical details, but ignorance of matters vital to any appreciation of verse. They do not know how to read it or how to feel it; they miss all the beauty that comes from the simplest knowledge of poetical forms. But this ignorance is easily done away with. A few lessons, a little simple explanation patiently repeated, and the idea is plain: they see how words may be grouped, according to their accents, into lines or verses, and these lines grouped, usually by rhyme, into stanzas. It is hard to decide at what times pupils may best be given this instruction. Much of it should have been given incidentally, from the earliest grades of the elementary school up, in connection with each piece of verse that has been read. But at some one time or, indeed, at several times, in the high school, it is wise to bring together and supplement this rapidly accumulating stock of information, that the pupil may feel that he understands the system of English verse as a system.[1] A convenient time for getting a first glimpse into the system of English versification occurs undoubtedly in connection with the course in formal grammar. After much supplementary and incidental instruction in connection with the work in English literature, the subject may again be taken up in connection with the more advanced work in rhetoric.

Prosody.

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rent information on such subjects, but the rapid progress of philological research has invalidated many of the observations and generalizations contained in them. A sound treatment of much the same topics will be found in the similar manual recently prepared by Professors Greenough and Kittredge, *Words and their Ways in English Speech*, Macmillan, 1901. Much use may also be made of the Oxford *New English Dictionary*.

[1] If he has studied Virgil, he is quite likely to have gained, by inference, an almost completely false notion of English versification, which has little in common with the Latin system.

II. Language: Old and Middle English

It is frequently urged that some attention should be paid in our secondary schools, as is done in those of other countries, to the older forms of the native language and literature. The following subjects are those most generally suggested for such study: —

Study of Old and Middle English.

(1) *The history of the English language.* The object would be to give the pupil some idea of the general relation to each other of the main branches of the Indo-Aryan stock and particularly of the Germanic languages; the difference between synthetic and analytic languages; the chief characteristics of Old English; the changes that, coming from within or acting from without, turned Old English into Middle English, and Middle English into New English; and such information regarding historical English, grammar, phonetics, etymology, and cognate matter as may be suited to his comprehension. Text-books dealing with the subject are likely to be either simple and unscientific, or scientific but not simple enough for the young student, and this fact, as well as the fact that such instruction can scarcely be given except by a teacher thoroughly trained in English philology, makes the subject one not likely to be taken up in most schools. It is, however, plain that under skilful direction the ground indicated could be covered in lectures and recitations during half of the last high school year.

(2) *Old English.* It is likewise plain that, under similar conditions, fourth-year pupils could in half a year gain a fairly adequate reading knowledge of early Anglo-Saxon prose.

(3) *Middle English.* An equal period would also be sufficient to introduce pupils to Chaucer and to give them the same degree of proficiency in reading.

It would obviously be absurd to put such studies previous to the fourth year, and few or none would be willing even then to prescribe them for all students. For presenting them as elective studies for the fourth year, particularly for well-advanced pupils who are not going to college,

Favourable Arguments.

there are several manifest advantages. Pupils show considerable interest in all three subjects (especially in the third); all three afford excellent mental discipline, improve the student's power of expression, increase his knowledge of literature, and indeed widen his whole mental horizon by bringing him into close relation, at first hand, with great monuments in the history of his race.

Adverse Arguments and Summary.

On the other hand, it is urged that a little knowledge is worse than none, and that we have as yet not enough time in our schools for even the indispensable parts of instruction in English. Both of these counter-arguments may be doubted. It is curious that experts of all kinds, in their hatred of charlatanry, are inclined to oppose the introduction into the high school curriculum of subjects which could be treated with better results later in the course of a life devoted to learning. But certainly all such subjects cannot be postponed because they could be taught later to greater advantage, for then there would be little left to teach; and the many who do not continue their education beyond the high school have a moral right to whatever knowledge will be of most service to them. And under such circumstances as we have pointed out, a knowledge of the older forms of the language would be to a considerable number a delight and an inspiration. It is true that there are problems of historical syntax and phonology of which they would still be ignorant, but they could learn to read the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the *Knight's Tale*, and draw from each an added insight into the wealth of English literature and the power and grace of the English language. As to the second point, it may be remarked that the situation is much better than it seems; the battle for sufficient time for English is really won; or victory is at least in sight. Having attained an assignment to English of three periods a week, as a minimum, throughout the course, teachers must now make sure that the time granted is used to the best advantage. My impression is that as the preparation in the elementary school improves, as good methods of instruction are introduced, and

skilled teachers of English alone allowed to give instruction, we shall find, within the next few years, that what we have been doing with difficulty in four years can be done easily in three. In some schools this is already the case, and in such schools I advise, for the reasons mentioned above, an elective course in Old English, covering half a year; an elective course in Middle English, completing the year; and, accompanying them both, a course of instruction on the history of the language.

Historical Grammar as a Supplementary Study.

Whatever may be thought with regard to the suggestions just made as to the probable value of systematic courses in the history of the language and in its older literature, there can be little or no doubt as to the utility of historical grammar when pursued in a supplementary way, precisely analogous to that employed in the supplementary study of modern English grammar. This supplementary study of historical grammar may indeed be regarded as beginning with that of systematic modern English grammar, for there the teacher will often pause in his task to make clear the new by means of the old, explaining, for instance, the odd apostrophe in the possessives of nouns by the old inflectional system. The supplementary study of historical grammar, however, will be in large measure connected only with the course in English literature, where will be found a wide and fertile field. As Mr. Rolfe remarked, "It would seem no more than reasonable that the only grammar the majority of people will ever study or refer to should cover the English of Shakspere, Milton, and King James's Bible," though I should prefer not to include these necessary matters in systematic grammar, but to connect them with the supplementary work of which we are now speaking. No high school course in English literature would be thought adequate in which Shakspere and Milton did not play a considerable part, and teachers are coming more and more to see that the work in Shakspere cannot be properly presented to pupils who have not, for a few days at least, studied systematically the differences between the language of Shakspere and the

vernacular of to-day. Later writers are less rich in this respect, but the poems of Scott and Coleridge contain many antique forms, and even in the prose of Addison points will arise that deserve attention.

III. Language: Rhetoric and Composition

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Present Status of Rhetoric and Composition.

It is easy to trace the history of this department of secondary English instruction and to define its present status. Up to about 1880 the work done in rhetoric had been of the most formal and artificial sort, and was not often accompanied by practical exercises or compositions. In some schools essays were written at rare intervals, but they were simply corrected in points of spelling and punctuation, and the writers at best given only a few offhand hints about plainness and conciseness of style. Two movements, both taking their rise in about 1880, combined to stimulate high school work in rhetoric and composition: first, the schools began to awake to the fact that they were neglecting an important subject, and, second, the colleges began to exert great pressure upon secondary schools, through entrance examinations, in favour of the same subject. At the outset,

the main aim of both parties seemed to be "correctness," the discarded ideal of grammar, which had now been passed on to a new phase of language-teaching, though the unenlightened schools conceived of it as rectitude in matters of spelling and punctuation, and the colleges as rectitude in the choice of words and framing of sentences. The schools soon caught the new idea of impeccable neatness of expression, and were devoting themselves ardently to it, when, in the early years of the new decade, two ideas of considerable power were brought to bear on secondary instruction in English through the influence and writings of Prof. Barrett Wendell and Prof. F. N. Scott. Each worked independently of the other, but the systems advocated by both agreed in two essential particulars: (1) that practice in writing counted for much more than theory; and (2) that the kind of "correctness" that was of the highest importance concerned not the word or the phrase, but the sentence, the paragraph, and the larger whole, — that, in brief, structure of thought was the main object to be kept in mind. These ideas were assimilated, throughout the country, with great rapidity, and resulted in changing to a marked degree the amount and character of high school work in English. The amount of writing was largely increased, the character of instruction became far less formal and was devoted rather to structure than to correctness of detail, though the latter was by no means neglected. Within the last few years, however, the strong tendency to make high school pupils write daily compositions and other similar exercises in great abundance has been checked by the feeling that it is not wise thus to force the immature mind into a habit that may prove to be only a fatal facility, and by the growing conviction that composition has in many schools been allowed unduly to overshadow literature. We seem, therefore, to be at the beginning of a period in which composition work in the high schools will be carried on in a better balanced fashion without going to any of the older extremes.

In the discussions that follow we use the term "rhetoric" with reference to formal or systematic instruction in the theory

of expression, parallel to instruction in formal or systematic grammar, and the term "composition" with reference to instruction and practice in the art of expression, *i. e.*, essay-writing and similar exercises. The old fashion was to teach rhetoric but not composition. Conversely, there are now some who believe that composition can be best taught without rhetoric.

Distinction between Rhetoric and Composition.

I have before called attention to the fact, once often disregarded but now becoming generally recognized, that the study of rhetoric presupposes a knowledge of grammar. Unless pupils are able intelligently to analyze any ordinary English sentence and to appreciate the relation existing between its component parts, they should not be permitted to take up rhetoric, for the essence of the latter study is that it considers the combination of sentences into larger groups according to given principles; and how can one learn to deal thus with the higher powers, so to speak, of a form with the elements of which he is not thoroughly acquainted?

Rhetoric presupposes Grammar.

In connection with our discussion of grammar we found that teachers were generally agreed that young people stand in need of a considerable amount of information as to the facts and laws of their native language, but sometimes failed to agree as to whether this information was to be given them formally or systematically, as a theory, or incidentally, in connection with other branches of English study. The same difference of opinion exists with regard to the teaching of rhetoric. Almost all teachers agree that there are certain facts, laws, principles, — call the information what you will, — that should be communicated to their pupils. The question is, as in the case of grammar, Shall this be done formally or incidentally? Here we find three typical opinions: first, that rhetoric can be taught alone, as an abstract theory, in the way that physics and chemistry used to be taught; second, that rhetoric, consisting of a modicum of theory, can be best taught when accompanied by a considerable amount of composition work,

Shall Formal Rhetoric be Taught?

just as physics is now taught by allowing at least an equal amount of laboratory work to supplement the theoretical work; third, that the pupil need make no formal study of the theory, inasmuch as he will master what is necessary through his composition writing.

The first opinion has now been generally rejected and need not be discussed. The third is held by many teachers of skill and experience, especially by those who teach composition in close connection with literature. It is best stated by Dr. Samuel Thurber, who declares that he "would abolish formal rhetoric entirely from the course; or at most give it a lesson or two at the very end as a sort of *résumé* of the foregoing discipline. Applied rhetoric, remember, will have been pursued during all the learner's school years. What the secondary school wants is the effects of rhetoric, not the science of it." [1]

Opinions Discussed.

Such teachers as Dr. Thurber would, then, prefer to give considerable practice in simple essay writing, and to bring out incidentally, as it were, the few principles of good writing with which it is necessary for the student to be familiar, or to develop them inductively from the English classics which are being read in the class in literature.[2] On the other hand, pupils of that age work more effectively with a text-book than without one, and it is wholly natural and proper that this should be the case. It seems, too, reasonable, that in this, as in other subjects, the principles laid down should be arranged and related to each other in an orderly and logical manner, so that the pupil's mind may be trained by comprehending the subject as a system rather than as a bundle of facts. Indeed, the danger of teaching rhetoric is merely that it be taught badly, that is, in too great detail; but against this danger the

The Apparent Necessity of some Systematic Rhetoric.

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[1] "English in Secondary Schools," SCHOOL REVIEW, October, 1894.

[2] Part of this paragraph, and of several paragraphs later in the chapter, are taken, with the permission of the Macmillan Co., from the author's *Notes for Teachers of English Composition* (1901).

well-educated and experienced teacher has long since learned to be on his guard. Though convinced of the futility of the old system of studying rhetoric, by which the pupil learned by heart a vast number of rules and principles that scarcely stood the test of practice or investigation in later life, he will also, probably, be convinced of the possibility, as well as the practical utility, of putting before pupils at this stage of their progress a simple exposition of the elementary principles of the art of expression, provided that it is accompanied, in accordance with modern methods, by a thoroughly good set of graded exercises, so that the pupil may practise what is preached to him, and grow in skill and in real power over his own thoughts as well as in mere knowledge. In short, a brief course in systematic rhetoric, as well as in systematic grammar, will, under ordinary circumstances and at the present time, be found of practical service in the teaching of English.

When shall Rhetoric be Taught?

If, then, we assume that it will ordinarily be convenient to give high school pupils some little instruction in systematic rhetoric as well as in systematic grammar, it remains to point out the time at which such instruction can most profitably be given. On this point most teachers would probably agree in thinking the second year the most fitting. The pupil has then completed his course in systematic grammar, he has had work in English literature and some practice in composition; he is now at home in his new environment, his powers of observation and reasoning have begun to grow rapidly, and he is already more of a young man than a boy. It is high time that, for half a year or so, he should have a little plain and kindly systematic instruction in the theory of written expression. If this be given him, he will be able to continue his practice in composition throughout the course without other instruction, unless, as may seem wise, pupils who are not going to college should be allowed to take, during their final year, a somewhat elaborate course in composition, in which case some slight further instruction in theory might then be added.

The subject-matter of school rhetoric has been so thoroughly and sensibly discussed by American teachers during the last ten years that it is not difficult briefly to indicate what seem to be the general conclusions. They are: — **What shall be Taught?**

(1) That the older method, descended from Blair and Campbell, of teaching dogmatically somewhat pedantic theories as to purity, propriety, and precision (not to mention perspicuity) and of elaborately analyzing and classifying multitudinous figures of speech, is valueless and is being rapidly discarded.

(2) That the succeeding method, which laid great stress on formal correctness, is also of doubtful or limited value. Systematic rhetoric may help the pupil to acquire the habit of correct expression, just as systematic grammar may also be of service to him in the same direction, but it cannot be his only help or his main help. He will be aided chiefly by the conversation he hears, by the example of his teacher and fellows, and by the knowledge of standard English which he gains from his study of English literature.

(3) That, therefore, the best method is one which, while not neglecting the study of correctness, lays most stress on the study of construction in the larger sense of the word, — the building up of a complete idea through a series of sentences or paragraphs.[1]

What has already been said about divided usage in systematic grammar will apply equally well to rhetoric, though in rhetoric the problems involved are more numerous and more perplexing. In some hundreds of cases, many of them of frequent occurrence in oral and **Divided Usage in Rhetoric.**

[1] We should not leave the subject without calling attention to two other points: (1) that a system or method does not make the use of a text-book indispensable, provided that the teacher has his own method clearly and definitely in mind; and (2) that in the teaching of rhetoric American teachers are greatly in advance of other countries. Throughout Europe the subject is almost invariably taken up according to the methods prevalent at the end of the last century.

written expression, the usage of intelligent, educated, English-speaking people differs, — somewhat more than one-half, let us say, uttering or writing one word or phrase and somewhat less than one half another. In olden days, when correctness was the aim of all linguistic instruction, it was the invariable practice of teachers, often on very slight authority, to pronounce one of these twin expressions "correct" and the other "incorrect." With our changed notions regarding language and propriety, we now feel this practice to be unscientific, and agree to call one expression "preferable" to the other on grounds of taste and analogy, or perhaps to recognize both as equally current. On the other hand, there is no doubt a general feeling among teachers that this theory is objectionable, first, because some one thing must be "right;" second, because it makes the task of the teacher so much harder, inasmuch as he himself is constantly at a loss to decide between variants; and, third, because the pupil may come to believe that he can say or write almost anything without fear of error. These pleas are, however, easily met. First, no one thing *must* be "right" in matters of custom; second, the teacher must be prepared to face the facts, whether the task be hard or easy; and, third, the pupil can feel assured that he cannot be justly reproached for employing expressions that are used by the most intelligent people with whom he comes into contact.

The whole subject is one deserving careful discussion. Three points, however, may be stated, which represent the deliberate opinion of the present writer: —

The same Subject Continued.

(1) It seems wise to accept without reserve the modern doctrine of divided usage, and to explain carefully to pupils that the real arbiter of correctness is the practice of intelligent and educated people, and that when, as often happens, usage differs, each speaker or writer can, without fear of being "incorrect" or "wrong," use either of the parallel forms.

(2) But it is important that pupils should understand that taste is an essential element in this choice, and that therefore

they should endeavour by training their own taste in language to render their choice, in cases of divided usage, one made not at random but in accordance with the dictates of cultivated instinct and good judgment.

(3) We all acknowledge that every publishing or printing house, and every school, class, or other group of individuals, has a right to decide, for purposes of convenience, on the use of one rather than another expression in cases of divided usage. Each school or teacher is advised to follow this practice. It will save endless discussion and, perhaps, bad feeling, and with it will disappear the plea that pupils suffer from bewilderment in not knowing "which is right."

(4) Care should be taken in the selection of a text-book, if one is used, that it be not unscientifically dogmatic on points of usage. It is unwise to allow a young student to acquire ideas regarding language which his later experience must inevitably show him to be unwise.

"Bad" English and Systematic Rhetoric.

From about 1885 to about 1895, one of the most difficult problems relating to secondary work in English was that of the part played in systematic rhetoric by the correction of "bad" English, *i. e.*, ungrammatical or unidiomatic expressions. At that time the text-books most in use concerned themselves largely with exercises of this kind, many colleges made a point of including such tests in their entrance examinations, and the current theory was that the careless habits of American boys in matters of expression could best be reached in this way. During the last few years, however, the problem has in the main disappeared and may practically be regarded as settled. There was right on both sides. The young must learn to express themselves decently and intelligently, and setting them to correct their own errors or those of others is often a considerable help. But to concentrate all or a greater part of secondary instruction on this negative process defeats, to some degree, the purpose involved. Text-books and systems of instruction now wisely give most attention to questions of structure, to the general method of composition, taking it mainly for granted

that the teacher will by various means and on all occasions insist on the use of correct English, — without pedantry, — and that the pupil will be led on all sides, and especially through his reading and study of literature and through his practice in oral or written composition, to acquire skill in the proper use of his native language. The old method, however, is still valuable on occasion and to a limited extent, and, in the case of pupils unfamiliar with good English idiom or resolutely neglectful of it, may often for a time be regularly employed with good results.

The following hints as to method may also be of service : —

Hints as to Method.

(1) It is well to cover the ground as rapidly as possible. Rhetoric is useful only as an advisable preparation for composition, just as certain parts of algebraic theory are of use only as necessary preliminaries to the solution of equations. Once it is clear that a class understands a given principle there is no need of lingering further over it.

(2) But it is important also to cover the ground thoroughly. The class must really understand the given principle before it is allowed to pass on. A few principles thoroughly understood will be of far greater service than a large number which are only imperfectly comprehended.

(3) If we regard systematic rhetoric as a sort of extension of systematic grammar, it will readily be seen that it may be of considerable value as a means of mental discipline. The systems used may vary, but whichever one is chosen may be with advantage taught *as a system*, a theory in which all the parts are related one to the other in a given way. Emphasis on rhetoric as a system, instead of a mere fortuitous assemblage of rules, will assist the student, provided the system is sufficiently sound and simple, and make the drill more rapid, more interesting, and more useful.

Supplementary Study.

The formal study of rhetoric must, however, like the formal study of grammar, be regarded as merely the beginning of the task. If the pupil ceases constantly to use it in connection with his other work in English, he is little the better off. In the case of rhetoric also, as in that of

grammar, the main fault of American instruction is that it too often fails to make use of opportunities for supplementary training. These are offered in abundance by the work in composition, where the pupil can apply constantly the system in which he has been trained, and by the work in literature, where his attention should, during the second and third years, be frequently called to points relating to the choice of words and to the grouping of words, sentences, and paragraphs. In rhetoric, too, as in the theory of any of the arts, it must not be forgotten that the essential principles cannot be mastered at once. Even when clearly apprehended at first, they take new forms and gather new meanings as the learner's experience broadens and as his taste and judgment mature. Systematic rhetoric — to use the pedantic term — is thus merely the beginning of a study of the principles of expression which will continue through life, under one form or another, and can never be regarded as completed.

A Second Course in Rhetoric.

The course which we have outlined for the first term of the second year deals only with the structure of expression, — with the choice of words and their grouping in sentences and larger units. The theory here involved will be quite sufficient for the pupil's needs in connection with his work in composition and literature during the remainder of the second year and the whole of the third year. At the beginning of the fourth year a different situation arises. It is the last year of education for many pupils, and it is only just that they should use it to the best advantage. They have now more maturity and more ambition, and their composition work becomes more spontaneous. They need training in description, narration, exposition, and argument. Here the same reasoning as that which we have outlined in the case of systematic grammar and of elementary rhetoric points to the setting aside of a few weeks or months for a theoretical treatment of the subjects mentioned. The teacher may, indeed, prefer merely to give a few incidental hints for the student's guidance in connection with his essays, or to develop a theory inductively in connection with the work in literature. But

either method is only in rare instances satisfactory: the danger of the first is that the pupil will get merely scattered hints, and hence be unable in after years to judge his own writing or that of others; the danger of the second is that he will get not only scattered ideas but misleading ideas, owing to the lack of a broad basis for induction furnished by the few works of literature read.

Several hints may be of service in connection with an advanced or fourth year course in systematic rhetoric: —

Method in Advanced Rhetoric.

(1) It is wise to avoid subtle distinctions as to methods of narration and description. Very few such methods and principles will stand careful and sane analysis. All the *theory* that any one needs to know about either narration or description is exceedingly small in amount, and can be easily presented to an intelligent class in a few hours. Exposition is obviously the kind of writing which the student will use most and in which he needs the most careful drill.

(2) The detailed study of argument is too difficult for pupils at this period. The process of proof, to be sure, they have been familiar with, in various forms, for several years, particularly through algebra, geometry, and the natural sciences; but the proof of any proposition of any weight in connection with history, economics, or literature involves a broad knowledge of facts and principles which it is impossible for the high school pupil to possess. The main advantage of the study of argumentation in the high school is thus, as an able secondary teacher remarks, that the pupil becomes conscious of the extreme difficulty of complete and scientific proof, and of his own inability to prove propositions of any complexity. Pursued in this spirit, the study is a valuable part of the student's training.

(3) As in the case of the elementary course in rhetoric and the systematic course in grammar, much depends upon the previous work of the pupil and upon his supplementary work. His mind must have been prepared by much incidental instruction, during the work of the second and third years in composition and in literature; and the training given in the advanced

course in systematic rhetoric must be supplemented, while it is being given and after it has ceased, by work both in literature and in composition.

Synonyms.

In connection with the discussion of formal rhetoric a moment's attention should be given to the old practice of requiring the systematic memorizing of definitions establishing distinctions between words meaning much the same thing, together with exercises in framing sentences involving the proper use of such words. It is much to be doubted whether this training was of any value whatsoever. Definitions of words apart from any context are not only very dull but very unsatisfactory. It is important that young people should learn these distinctions. It is not necessary, however, to give such instruction in a fashion that runs counter to the known laws of mental activity. The proper place for learning the exact meaning of words is in connection with the regular work in literature and in composition. In the former the teacher will do his best to make sure that the pupil understands the force of each word and its shade of meaning, and in the second he may encourage him constantly to broaden his vocabulary by the appropriate use of such new words.

Composition an Essential Subject.

No other subject of school instruction, certainly no other subject in the field of English, is so important as composition. Other subjects are means to an end. We pursue them in order that the mind may be stimulated to healthful activity, or may accumulate the material on which it will work when trained and roused to activity. Composition, however, is itself *an activity* or the sign of an activity. Through it we may determine the amount of dynamic power possessed by the student, the extent to which it has been developed, the character and substance of the information which he has acquired, and the degree to which he is lord over it. It is of great importance, therefore, that the teacher should discuss with care the various problems relating to the work in composition, in order that it may in every way possible be made effective.

Shall there be a Teacher of Composition?

As we have seen, composition was until recently not an important element in secondary instruction. Within the last twenty years, however, it has made great strides forward. At the present time the teacher of English is, in many cases, chosen largely on the basis of his skill in teaching composition, and "English" in the curriculum often means scarcely more than English composition. The teacher of composition has thus become an exceedingly strong influence in secondary instruction. Broad-minded, well-balanced, sympathetic, eager to learn and to teach, quick to read character and skilful in training his pupils in power of observation and reasoning, he — or more often *she* — has won the respect and affection of the whole school community. But the question may very properly be put, — and has been very strongly put by Dr. Samuel Thurber, — Is it the business of any one teacher to give instruction in composition? Is it not rather the duty and privilege of all?

"What I must say here is that the special teacher of composition should be abolished. He does no good, and he stands in the way. The reading of a certain limited amount of juvenile writing for purposes of correction is a pleasing task, leading to personal relations, to an appreciation of individual difficulties, to a possible giving of wise counsel. But the reading of juvenile writing in great quantities is inconsistent with mental and physical health. All the teachers of a school should share equally this task of supervising the English writing. I do not see how any teacher, man or woman, can have the effrontery to claim to know good English better than the rest; and I do not see how any teacher can submit to have the drudgery of having several times his share of this work thrust upon him."[1]

Dr. Thurber's plan, consistent as it is in many respects with the best educational theory, is a counsel of perfection. In the ideally constituted, frictionless school machine it would be possible and advisable. Nay, more, it is a device that can

[1] Samuel Thurber, "Five Axioms of Composition Teaching," SCHOOL REVIEW, January, 1897.

in certain rare institutions be already put into practice; if adopted in small colleges, under skilful administration, it might there work wonders. But it can scarcely be seriously considered to-day by the rank and file of secondary schools throughout the country, for three reasons. First, what is everybody's business is nobody's business. The proper results would — through indifference, indolence, or sheer lack of time and strength on the part of teachers and pupils — simply not be secured at all. Second, there is, sad to say, good reason for believing that in far too many cases some teachers *do* use better English than others, and that a great number do not use good English at all. Third, even if all teachers were equal in this capacity, all would scarcely be equal in the peculiar characteristics that distinguish the good teacher of composition. Indeed, this special work can often not be entrusted even to the teacher of English literature, who knows and teaches his branch of the subject thoroughly, but who frequently cannot somehow succeed in getting boys and girls to write well.

Yes; at Present.

Therefore, reluctantly agreeing that work in composition must be under the charge of a special teacher, we pass to the consideration of a necessary corollary, What help in the field of composition can the teacher of English get from his colleagues? Here we are on more solid ground. Three points at once suggest themselves:

Aid from Outside.

(1) The teachers in a secondary school should by solemn compact bind themselves to foster in every way the use of good English in all classrooms. Under this agreement they would discourage slovenly or incorrect pronunciation and slipshod expression, and would absolutely decline to receive papers in which errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar are conspicuous, or to approve oral recitations in which the English is plainly bad.[1] Further, they would, in the inter-

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1 This is again a counsel of perfection. But much can be done in this way if teachers are only willing to do as much as they can. The dangers are: (1) that teachers will not take the trouble to meet together and dis-

ests of their own subjects, help their pupils to acquire the priceless habit of accurate statement.

(2) Much can be done for composition by means of the prolonged oral recitation, — the topical recitation. Pupils are too much inclined to get along, if they can, by saying yes or no, or uttering little scraps of information, sure of being prodded or cajoled into giving the rest of the answer. A pupil who can speak for two or three moments, quietly and clearly, on a given topic, has a real command over his knowledge and his faculties.

(3) The writing of exercises, summaries, and essays on subjects lying outside the field of English may also be turned to good account. But here also we must step with caution. There is real danger that the pupil will have too much writing to do, which is almost worse than none at all. On this matter teachers should consult each other, agreeing on a stated schedule, so that the poor beast of burden may not be so outrageously overweighted as to make no real progress. Nor is it clear that the teacher of composition should have any share in the correction of papers written for other departments. That will depend upon circumstances. Other things being equal, each department can best attend to its own exercises. All that is important is that the department of English should keep on good terms with its sister departments, and that all should agree on the amount of work thus required and on the standards to be used in judging it.

"Style."

It is to be doubted whether young people can safely be talked to about "style." Scientifically speaking, every writer has his habits of expression, which differ only in slight particulars from those of his fellows. From

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cuss the matter carefully, to see just what they had best do; (2) that, because the pressure of time keeps them from doing all they want to do, they will decline to do anything; and (3) that some teachers who have hard and fast (and perhaps unscientific) ideas as to what is "correct" will strain over the minute and unimportant errors in idiom and let slip the opportunity to scotch the really vicious practices of thought and speech.

the artistic point of view style is a highly specialized set of habits in composition, such as are acquired only by an individual either of considerable maturity or endowed with unusual talent in matters of expression. Young people rarely have any such highly specialized habits of expression, nor is it desirable that they should try to acquire them. The duty of the teacher is to see that they write plainly and clearly and naturally, — that is all. Nor is it wise to talk to them much about the "style" of great authors. They should be helped to enjoy the special charm of various pieces of literature, but for this purpose very little detailed analysis is necessary. Indeed, little detailed analysis of an author's style is possible until psychology has made further advances.

Translation.

The peculiar linguistic training to be obtained from translation has been often vaunted, and no doubt there is much that is sound in the laudation. But there are several limitations that detract from the merits of translation as a secondary exercise in English. First, the whole element of structure is absent. The pupil must follow some one else's thought, and, generally speaking, cannot depart from the order of statement employed in the original. Second, the pupil must not, in a school exercise in translation, vary much from a literal version. It is the classical master's business to see that the foreign original — in its construction — is felt through the English version, whereas to translate well, into English that is thoroughly idiomatic, is frequently to weave together the elements of thought so differently that the translation is a re-creation of the matter in a form often strangely diverse. This practical necessity of rendering literally is strikingly apparent in so-called translations at sight, written for examination purposes, where no sane youth would dream of writing anything but a sort of English parallel or facsimile of the foreign original. Third, the task is one in which judgment, maturity of mind, and reflection play a large part. The boy of sixteen has rarely the intellectual power to do work requiring such careful introspection, such minute consideration of the associations connected with words, such deliberate dis-

crimination. With these disadvantages in mind, the teacher of English, while encouraging translation, will make but a guarded use of it in secondary as distinguished from college instruction.

How much Composition Writing?

As to the work that falls directly within the field of composition writing, we have first to ask ourselves how much, how often, may the secondary student be expected to write. Here opinions differ widely, but I am convinced that: —

(1) He should certainly write no more than the teacher has time to read.[1] At least the opposite method should never be adopted except for reasons of solid weight, and then only in the case of mere exercises.

(2) He should certainly write no more than he can write well. Even for a mature person a few hundred words a day is a good average, if he has thinking to do before and while he writes, and other things to attend to. Composition is not a trick of the hand, but the most delicate act of mental balance and control. To the boy the writing of two hundred words often seems like a labour of Hercules. And it must be remembered that it is folly to force a growing boy to be fluent. Let him think a little, and compose a little, — just enough so that there is no inhibition, so that the habit grows with his increasing knowledge, self-consciousness, and self-control. Just how much this should be each teacher must find out for himself with due regard to the existing circumstances. The pupil should have some writing to do every day; he should do it with care and should be judged by it. But this need not be a "daily theme" — a burden proper only for broader shoulders,[2] — but a simple exercise, based usually on some one of his school duties and usually designed for another teacher. For the composition specifically required by his English teacher, once a week will usually be often enough.

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[1] See Samuel Thurber, "Elementary Composition in High Schools," THE [Syracuse] ACADEMY, November, 1889.

[2] See Samuel Thurber, "Five Axioms of Composition Teaching," SCHOOL REVIEW, 1897, V. 14.

The question of the relation between written composition and literature is a perplexing matter, and must be solved by each instructor according to his own experience and in connection with his own methods and general policy. Many successful teachers hold that composition should be kept in such close relations with the work in literature as to be almost, if not quite, a subdivision of it, basing their theory on the ground that the works read in the course in literature serve naturally, not only as the student's inspiration, but as his models. Though it is not to be doubted that appreciative reading will be a constant source of inspiration to the student and a natural and proper stimulus, it may be objected, on the other hand, that masterpieces of literature are scarcely normal models for high school students.[1] Masterpieces are the work of men, not of boys, — and of men of genius at that. The youth can in many instances understand and appreciate them, he can be stimulated by them, but, even when the masterpiece belongs to the period in which he is living, he is rarely if ever fitted, physically or psychologically, to treat himself a subject of anything like the same sort in a style even remotely similar. A boy is a boy, and to a boy belong a boy's subjects and a boy's style. In the opinion of the present writer, therefore, it would be certainly possible, though scarcely advisable, to teach a boy to write thoroughly well without requiring him to make in any way a study of English literature, — perhaps, in an extreme case, without reading books at all. Provided that he is supplied with a fairly good vocabulary, whether by reading or by conversation, or by both, he can be so trained, during his school days, by practice, correction, and criticism, as to be able to express his own ideas in a rational and sensible manner, precisely as, under good instruction, a boy could learn to draw really well

Topics from Literature.

[1] As my collaborators remind me, I must not fail to state that what I say applies only to the use of literature as a *model*. It is natural that subjects for compositions should often be taken from English literature, — summaries, criticisms, and the like, — though I do not believe that it is wise to use such subjects exclusively or more than to a moderate degree.

by attempting, under such guidance and correction, one tangible object after another, without ever having seen or studied the work of a great artist. Certainly, by availing ourselves of the inspiration that must inevitably come from the proper reading and study of literature, we can give high school students — and, for that matter, college students — the very best training in composition without letting them stray far away from the subjects most suitable to their age and experience. It is not, then, in my opinion, wise to attempt to correlate too closely the course of study in literature and that in composition. The student must depend on literature for much of his general stimulus and often for specific hints. The subjects for essays may, too, frequently be taken from topics in literature just as from topics in history. But it should not be forgotten that the main object in view is to train the pupil in the art of expressing his own thoughts and not those of another, and that this means, in the case of a high school pupil, that he must be taught how to think consciously and logically, and how to express clearly these conscious and logical thoughts. The secret of good teaching in this respect lies in letting the pupil always feel that he is handling thoughts that are genuinely his, or that are essentially of his sort, not the thoughts of an older person or of another epoch.[1]

Choice of Subjects Continued.

If the question as to the taking of subjects mainly from the work in English literature be regarded as settled, the teacher will scarcely find much further difficulty as to subjects. The text-books all make many suggestions, and the life of the school community is so rich that the instructor, once committed to the policy of letting boys write on what they are actually thinking about or are glad to be thinking about, will find himself swept briskly along by a powerful and vital current. Experience has shown that, even in the public schools of large cities, the pupils from homes where refinement does not enter are not thereby at a

[1] See the admirable essay of Samuel Thurber, "Composition Topics," THE [Syracuse] ACADEMY, October, 1890.

disadvantage as regards the material of their essays, for, like their more cultivated fellows, and even more than they, they can draw at will from a multitude of interesting trades and handicrafts, and from the stimulating sights and incidents that make up the life of a great city.

Two special forms of composition, — paraphrasing and verse writing, — as to the value of which there has been much dispute, may be conveniently taken up at this point. The case against paraphrasing has been most strongly stated by Dr. Laurie, whose attack we quote in full: — **Paraphrasing.**

"To facilitate the full comprehension of difficult sentences and paragraphs, the exercise came into general use in this country [Scotland] about twenty-five years ago. Paraphrasing consists in the turning into common-place language, which 'any fellow may understand,' the verse of a poet, or the succinct prose of such writers as Bacon and Browne, or the luxuriant paragraphs of Jeremy Taylor. A more detestable exercise I do not know. It is a vile use of pen and ink. One would, of course, submit to it as an unhappy necessity were there no other way of showing that we understand an author. But this is far from being the case. To paraphrase Milton or Shakspere is to turn the good into the inferior or the bad, and to degrade literature. Moreover, it is false. For the youth who has done it imagines that his bald sentences give all that is to be found in the original passage of Milton or Bacon. If this were so, then there would, alas! be no such thing as literature, no such thing as Art in language. When all is done, you have no longer got Bacon or Milton, but only your much lesser self. This exercise is based on a misunderstanding of the whole situation. Teachers were vaguely groping for some means of assuring themselves that their pupils really saw their way through the organism of a piece of poetry, — terse, elliptical, and frequently inverted in the *ordo verborum*. But this object can quite well be obtained by a process which might be called 'Resolution,' or, to please those fond of big words, 'Dialysis.' It simply consists in the writing out of the piece of poetry in grammatical prose order, supplying words understood, but *always preserving* the *language of the poet*. This prevents a boy from contenting himself **Paraphrasing Attacked.**

with that vague knowledge which is not knowledge at all, but mere impression supported by dim, disconnected images, or, it may be, by the mere musical rhythm of language. It compels him to be exact, and may, perchance, startle him for the first time into the perception that poets, after all, talk plain sense, and may thus awaken his critical faculties. To shut the book and try to express the substance of the thought of a prose writer in your own words, is an excellent exercise, but this is not 'paraphrasing' as commonly practised." [1]

Paraphrasing Defended.

In direct opposition to Dr. Laurie's views are those of Mr. H. C. Bowen. "'Paraphrasing,'" he says, "is the unpacking and exhibiting clearly and at large of the whole meaning of a passage which, in the author in question, is expressed in a brief and condensed or figurative form, or perhaps, at times, rather suggested than expressed. It requires in the pupil a knowledge of the real force of the allusions, and of the bearing of the passage as a whole on its context, and the occasion on which it is used. It requires an appreciation of the exact force and intention of the metaphors, similes, and epithets, and a consciousness of that *associated* meaning or colour which certain words and phrases acquire, and which are brought out most distinctly in the contrasts between so-called synonyms. It is only when this knowledge of, this insight into, what the author desires to convey to us has been sought for and gained, that we are in a position to truly appreciate, and really delight in, the art and beauty of his mode of expression. To ascertain whether our pupils have gained this knowledge and insight we must require them to tell us what the passage has told them. This exercise in giving outward expression to the thoughts and feelings which they have made their own is of great value educationally." [2]

Paraphrasing is not a common exercise in our secondary schools, and the whole system is one of theoretical rather than

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[1] *Lectures on Language and Linguistic Method in the School*, p. 52.
[2] *English Literature Teaching in Schools*, London, 1891, p. 32.

practical importance. It is, however, so frequently brought up for discussion that it is of importance that teachers should have clear ideas about it. The gist of the matter seems to be as follows: —

Summary.

(1) As Dr. Laurie says, there is no sense in requiring a paraphrase into bald English of beautiful and intricate passages in prose and verse if the pupil gets the impression that his bald version is really the equivalent of the original. It would be better, as Dr. Laurie suggests, to require in its place — if it is necessary to make sure that the original is understood — a sort of construing that, using the words of the original, would indicate the ordinary prose construction.

(2) But, as Dr. Laurie himself acknowledges, there would sometimes be a distinct advantage in asking a pupil to express in his own words his understanding of a difficult or intricate prose passage, keeping his book closed meanwhile. If so, it is hard to see why the process would not be equally helpful in dealing with a similar poetical passage, and why, provided the pupil still gave his own impressions in his own words, his book might not as well be open as shut.

(3) The point really at issue, therefore, is whether, inasmuch as a considerable part of the effect produced by poetry or beautiful prose must be analogous to that produced by music and hence not translatable into words, it is well to encourage any attempt to render the impressions produced by such passages into plain English.

But there is obviously an intellectual or logical substratum for even delicate æsthetic impressions, and it is of value to the pupil that he be taught clearly to recognize this element in literature, and, further, that he be encouraged to express in his own words whatever he feels or knows. On this basis, it seems evident that those in favour of paraphrase have won their case, though, on the other hand, it is equally evident that the exercise is mainly to be used in direct connection with the work of literature, that it may most often be carried on orally, and that, like analysis or parsing, it should not be continued, except at intervals, after the pupil

has learned to perform unconsciously the process of understanding which it aims to cultivate.

Verse Writing.

With regard to verse writing there is less to be said, for the question has not reached the stage of general and public discussion. Within the last few years a considerable number of secondary teachers have found that they could interest their pupils in verse writing, and that, as a result of such training, their pupils were often able to produce very creditable verse and showed, in addition, a more marked appreciation of English poetry.[1] Other teachers have made attempts in the same direction without much success, and many have doubted whether the exercise was feasible, unless in exceptional cases. The consensus of opinion appears to be this:

(1) Pupils must in some way learn to understand the mechanism of English verse. If this is presented to them systematically, as it perhaps should be, it is quite likely that they will be considerably aided in understanding it by trying themselves to write blank verse. This much may be regarded as fairly well established, both by practice and by general educational theory.

(2) It would be unwise to ask all teachers and all classes to go further than this. But, when the teacher is himself interested in such work, it is highly advisable that he should try the experiment of requiring the whole class, at some appropriate time, to write several quatrains, some hexameters, and finally a sonnet. He will perhaps be surprised to find that many pupils succeed in doing their tasks well, and that even those who were previously insensible to rhythm and rhyme begin now to get a distinct sense of what the pleasure is which poetry gives, and are stimulated, if not to further writing, at least to further reading. It is not necessary or desirable that every man and woman should write verses, but it is desirable that every man and woman should love poetry, and a little verse writing in youth may prove one of the most efficient aids to this end.

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[1] Chubb, *The Teaching of English*, Chapter XVIII.

(3) So far all the class may go. Those who show ability may go further, if more important tasks do not prevent. Especially in the case of students not going to college it would be wise, in connection with the last year's work in composition, to give an opportunity, from time to time, for the writing not of doggerel parody but of unaffected and sincere verse.

The Process of Essay Writing.

In the process of essay writing, it should be noticed, the teacher has his share. The audience, the miniature public which the pupil addresses, is the class, or, on rare occasions perhaps, the whole school. The teacher is the counsellor of the author, the protector of the public. He approves the subject as one likely to interest the little community; he helps the author in his search for material, and at need in his arrangement of it; but he also guards the public from boredom, refusing to accept in its behalf the illiterate or carelessly composed or vulgar essay. It is a mistake or a misfortune to think of the teacher's work as beginning only when the essay is handed in. It may, indeed, if his method has been well thought out and his counsel good, be almost wholly completed.

The Teacher of Composition as an Expert.

It is a mistake, too, for the teacher to allow himself to be thought of as an unscientific and unlearned person who merely knows "how to say things." He is instead an expert in adolescence. Himself mature, broad-minded, well read, he has not entirely put away his sympathy with the young. He understands them, knows when to repress and when to stimulate, of what is the substance of their thought, and how their minds may wisely be led to subjects worthy of permanent interest. This delicate, inspiring, tactful influence may well be the most important factor in their development. He owes himself, therefore, some self-esteem, for his place is hard to fill.

With regard to the correction of essays, the instructor of experience will need no advice, but the teacher who is just entering on the duties of his profession will, perhaps, be glad of a few hints.

(1) The reading and correction of essays, and the subsequent conferences on them with pupils, form by far the most important part of your work. Take pains, therefore, to perform such duties with the utmost thoroughness. Insist that pupils shall present their manuscripts at the time designated, and in the form prescribed. Do not waste your time in reading essays on which the pupil has put little time or thought. Mark such essays zero, and it is not likely that the pupil will repeat the experiment. Insist, so far as possible, that sufficient time be given you for reading essays with proper care, and for a proper amount of conference on them with students, either individually or in small groups. Give to the task of reading and correction, so far as possible, your best or freshest hours, either early in the morning or just after invigorating exercise. The practice of reading essays by artificial light, or when jaded, is usually injurious, both physically and professionally.

The Correction of Essays.

(2) When reading essays, make yourself as comfortable as possible, and take measures to guard yourself against interruption. You are engaged in an important professional duty, and it is necessary that you should have all your faculties in good working order. With regard to each essay, there are two things to be considered. First, has the pupil used correct English? Second, has he given to his thought full, clear, and well-balanced expression? The best way, as a rule, is to read each essay twice. The first reading should be for correctness. Mark each error in spelling, punctuation, etc., as you read, provided that the errors are of such a kind that the pupil can fairly be supposed to be acquainted with the proper form. In the early stages of composition work, be careful not to bewilder the pupil by calling his attention to errors the consideration of which properly belongs to a later stage in his training. If there are many errors, the teacher should not go further, and the essay should be returned for rewriting.

The First Process.

So far the teacher's task has been largely mechanical, but he has as yet performed merely his preliminary and more

elementary office. If, in the case of essays which are in the main correctly written, he stops here, he is as likely to have done harm as good, for he has left untouched the most important point, — has the pupil got hold of a definite idea and given to that idea a sufficiently full, clear, and well-balanced expression? If he has, he should be praised. If he has not, he should be shown how and why. But this should be done, if possible, by word of mouth and not by writing. In this second reading, then, the teacher's task calls for good judgment, an insight into what young people may with reason be expected to know, and much skill in seizing the hazy thought which the boy actually had in mind, and in drawing him on, little by little, to see the steps by which that thought can be well expressed. Be sure, finally, not to give a high mark, under ordinary circumstances, to an essay in which the writer has not honestly striven to give expression to some real thought of his own. Good thinking expressed in incorrect language must not be tolerated, but neither must correct language without good thinking.[1]

The Second Process.

(3) Avoid sarcasm and irritable comments. Keep your sense of humour wakeful, and be as kindly disposed towards your inferiors in skill as you would wish your superiors to be towards you.

(4) Don't be fussy or finicky. No two people write alike, and it would be abnormal for a youth to have the style of a person of mature years. The essential thing is that he shall have an idea, that he shall consciously strive to give that idea its best expression, and that in the process he shall not have overstepped the bounds of correct usage.

(5) Teachers should feel that, in proportion as they do their work skilfully, they are experts, in precisely the same way and to precisely the same degree that trained teachers of

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[1] Here is one of the great stumbling-blocks in practical instruction. Many a teacher can do excellent work on the more mechanical side, and succeed in getting his pupils to write clearly and correctly, who fails completely in getting them to express ideas which are other than the mere replica of what they have just heard or read.

mathematics or chemistry are experts. To teach composition well, one must have scholarship, cultivation, good judgment, and ingenuity.

(6) Teachers of composition are peculiarly prone, from the nature of their work, to discouragement and irritability. Don't try to do more than you can do well; take plenty of exercise and sleep; work hard while you do work, — and if you have had the proper training, you will surely do well. If you find your judgment growing confused while you are reading essays, stop and take some light exercise for five minutes or read an amusing book.

IV. Language: Oral Composition

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Importance of Oral Composition.

It was a misfortune that, during a great part of the nineteenth century, our secondary schools were so largely engaged in teaching dead learning. Knowledge was conceived of as something acquired by the eye through books, independent of personal activity or experiment, to be retained in the memory as so much dead weight, and at need to be regurgitated in the form of written words. Educational theory and practice have in many respects changed our methods and our outlook, particularly in the natural sciences, where the laboratory has supplanted the text-book; but there is danger that in the field of English we shall cling too closely to the old pedantic fashion, and, while throwing stress on written composition, the more unreal and lifeless form of the art, neglect oral composition, which is the art in its human and natural, in its least lifeless and mechanical shape. For, in the first place, it is a mistake to conceive of language as primarily *written*, of the real or standard language as expressed in visual

symbols, and of speech as only an artificial, secondary, or derived form. Precisely the contrary is true. No study of language is scientific that is not based on the grouping of its sounds, on its uses on the lips of men. The grammar we study is too often confined merely to the more or less unnatural or literary language, and we often err in sending pupils to dictionaries and similar printed material, which are merely imperfect works of reference, valuable mainly as rough and mechanical classifications of existing usage, — chiefly with regard to the written language, — when the great source of all such information, the primary facts of usage, the speech of the intelligent and the educated, is continually ringing in their dull ears. One great advantage of laying stress on oral composition, then, is that it tends to rivet the pupil's attention on the facts and usages of his native language in their most living and vital forms. In the second place, the pupil will be greatly helped in his work in written composition by such practice in oral composition as will ensure his conceiving of the latter as the normal or typical form of expression, so that he will write with the idea of how his words will sound (rather than how they look) constantly before him. In the third place, he will be helped in his study of literature, for, similarly, he will enrich his store of associations with English words and phrases, and, what is perhaps even more important, he will learn, through his studies in the control and management of the human voice, to give to what he reads a more varied and adequate expression, and thereby, if the psychologists are right, to realize more keenly, by the very fact of possessing greater powers of physical utterance, the emotional value of literature. In the fourth place, oral composition is of practical importance. It is only a few who can influence the public by essays or written appeals; many men and women — indeed almost all in whose lives social, political, or business affairs play any considerable part — influence their fellows by spoken words. In the American republic of to-day, almost as much as in the Grecian republics of two thousand years ago, the acquiring of skill in speech is, for the active citizen, a duty and a necessity.

Elocution: Is a Special Teacher Necessary?

The people at large, and particularly teachers, have unfortunately become somewhat prejudiced against elocution. We mean by the term, nowadays, merely good habits of physical utterance, but for a long while we perhaps thought of it as a difficult and esoteric art, based on a metaphysics of its own; and we were often encouraged in this belief by "elocutionists," who seemed to be not as other men because they alone were master of the inner wisdom that led to such unnatural mouthing of words and such abnormal gesticulations. But now that elocution is more rightly understood as the simple and useful art, based on the study of the human vocal organs, of clear and effective utterance, and the elocutionist merely the master who, himself carefully trained, teaches this art, the situation is entirely different and does not call for suspicion or prejudice. It is clear that secondary pupils should be trained in these matters. The first question is, Who shall train them? In general and in the abstract, it is obvious that no special teacher should be necessary, precisely as in composition. We all — presumably — use our vocal organs properly and are thus fitted to teach others. Practically, however, as in the case of composition, some are better fitted than others for this task, inasmuch as the effective use of the voice is far less common than might be thought, and skill in teaching the art may also vary. It is wiser, therefore, for some one of the teaching staff — preferably the English master — to make himself responsible for the whole matter, and for the other teachers to co-operate with him systematically in a task which is as much for their benefit as for his. Where a special teacher of singing is employed, he may also take the work in elocution, and in large school systems it is advisable to have a special instructor in voice-training who has no other duties. In this case he should know his business thoroughly. There is no form of metaphysics that has any bearing on the subject at all. The training of the speaking voice and the training of the singing voice are precisely parallel. Both require scientific knowledge of physical facts, natural aptitude of ear and voice, and skill in

teaching, but they have only the remotest connections with theoretical æsthetics, psychology, and philosophy.

The results desired are exceedingly simple and have already been mentioned. They are merely that such of our men and women as have had the advantage of a high school education shall be able to breathe properly, use their vocal organs properly, and have such control and range of voice as to be able to express appropriately various shades of meaning, whether in ordinary speech, in reading aloud, or in public discourse. We need such training sadly. Few men can speak to an audience so as to be heard fifty feet away, even with an unnecessary expenditure of breath and muscular effort; few women breathe properly, and the shrill nasal voices of many of our young women, in marked contrast with their refinement, intelligence, and beauty, are absolutely unpardonable. Such training as may be given in a secondary school will not cure all these faults in every case, but it will certainly do away with three-quarters of them, when teachers are earnest and thoughtful, and will help make life better worth living for us all.

The Results Desired.

The practice of requiring each student to "declaim" before his class or the whole school, formerly much in vogue, is now apparently disappearing, and, for many reasons, the change is a mark of progress. The alleged advantages of the old system were (*a*) that it brought students together as a whole, in an exercise that concerned them all; (*b*) that it trained the memory; (*c*) that it gave an opportunity for gaining control over the voice; and (*d*) that it led the modest and the timid to overcome their dread of addressing an audience and gave others useful experience in the same direction. On the other hand, it may properly be urged (*a*) that there are other equally appropriate occasions for the assembling of students as a whole; (*b*) that the memory is sufficiently trained in other ways; (*c*) that, unless supplemented by careful training in elocution, declamation could have little effect on the control of the voice; and (*d*) that the public ordeal was scarcely calculated to reassure the timid, —

Declamation.

in short, that the time, effort, and trouble involved in the exercise were out of proportion to the benefits derived from it. It is certainly clear that almost all of the advantages which it was supposed to offer can be easily secured from the practice of reading aloud in the classroom, which is further made desirable by the fact that it does not tempt the pupil into an artificial, exaggerated, and gesticulatory form of delivery. If students have had, however, proper drill in elocution and sufficient practice in reading aloud, it can do them no harm, towards the end of their course, to give declamations or to read their own compositions before the whole school, and the experience will probably often be useful to them.

Reading Aloud.

For the old system of declamation may be substituted, in short, a less formal and more effective method, by which even better results are obtained. The teacher of elocution does his part, or, to speak more in accordance with what is likely to be the fact in the average school, the teacher of English, at a fairly early point in the course, gives to the entering class a sufficient number of sensible and thorough exercises in the management of the voice, and explains to them the principles which must be borne in mind until their application becomes habitual. But the main element in the instruction we are discussing is simply reading aloud, practised in connection with the work in literature and in composition, — reading which shall be carried on regularly, week in and week out, year in and year out, throughout the course; and which shall aim simply to be audible, natural, and expressive. If this plan be adopted, if no exercise in composition or literature take place without at least one pupil's reading aloud with these objects in mind, the problem will be found to solve itself. Not only that: it will be apparent, unless all theory and experience be at fault, that the other branches of English study will be correspondingly benefited. We cannot read well without recognizing clearly the meaning and force of words and the structure of sentences and paragraphs. And, conversely, if we read well, we are sure not to be lacking in knowledge of grammar and in a grasp of

literature, and we are likely to write much better than we otherwise should.

In a well-arranged secondary course in English it is almost impossible not to provide for a considerable amount of training in oral composition. Even in the elementary school, oral composition is the natural and proper preliminary to written composition. In the high school it is equally important that oral composition should not be pushed too far in the background, for speech — not writing — is the vital and essential form of language. All good teachers will encourage and demand topical recitations at frequent intervals, and teachers of English will be helped by fostering discussion and the free expression of opinion, within necessary limits, by advising pupils to get their materials for composition so thoroughly in mind, before writing their essays, that they can utter their thoughts freely and concisely, and by sometimes requiring them to do so. The students' own ambition will also further the end in view. They will have their literary societies, their debating societies. These the teacher will encourage warily, for they often waste time and breed affectation and the mere spouting of nonsense. Particularly must he be on his guard with reference to debating. Adolescents can go through the form of debate, but real debating, in which the truth is sought through rigid testing of evidence and sound induction and deduction, is beyond their stage of mental growth, and is as harmful to their immature minds as certain forms of athletics would be to their immature bodies. The more careful exposition boys and girls do, the better for them; and a dash of attempted argument from time to time may not be amiss. But if they must debate, let them act under the direction of some older and wiser head, who will lead them to simple subjects, and, even in these, take pains to make it evident that only under exceptional circumstances will they be able *really to prove* any proposition whatsoever.

Oral Composition.

Part II. — Literature in the Secondary Schools

For the general bibliography, see the bibliographies prefixed to this chapter and to Chapter II.

So many and so effective have been the justifications of the introduction of literature into the secondary course of study,[1] that the question may now be considered as fully answered. English literature is now, in all good secondary schools, a subject of good standing, having its share of time in the regular school program. The pre-eminence once given to the classics and mathematics has passed, and in many cases has been given to English literature.

A firmly Established Subject,

The doubts as to whether it can be taught are also ceasing, for the sufficient reason that it is taught in many schools with as great measure of success as are the other subjects, whether judged by its opportunities as a means of discipline, as a subject of information, or as a means of cultivating taste. The grounds on which its claims rest, — as a means of knowing life, as a source of the higher pleasures, as a form of training, and as an ethical force, are the same as obtain in the elementary school, and have been discussed in the chapter devoted to that subject.

which can be Taught,

and is worth Teaching.

The divergences of opinion with regard to its treatment in the secondary school are concerned with other matters: with the questions how, how much, in what order, and including what sorts of facts and ideas. In no subject is there greater variety in the content and method of instruction than in literature. The personality of the teacher and the bent of the department of the university which gave him his training, the requirements of the various

What Aspects of the Subject shall be Taught?

[1] See especially Laurie, Hinsdale, and Corson, cited above, and the files of THE ACADEMY, THE SCHOOL REVIEW, and THE EDUCATIONAL REVIEW.

colleges as indicated in their entrance examinations,[1] the standards maintained by state systems, and the home life and previous reading of the pupils, all condition and determine the instruction. In fact, the subject is and must always remain not only one of the most vaguely defined, but one of those in which the personal element in teacher and pupil is most present and most valuable. For not only are æsthetics and the canons of criticism in a most unsettled state,[2] but literature, being an art, is an expression of a personal point of view of the author, — is, in fact, his interpretation of a certain phase of life, — and deals with that class of phenomena regarding which it is most difficult and unsafe to dogmatize. Moreover, it must always be that the different aspects of literature will have different degrees of interest for different minds; the æsthetic, the philosophical, the linguistic, or the historical may appeal to us with peculiar force.

But no matter what our peculiar predilections may be, it is obvious that for pupils of the secondary schools the first thing in studying literature is to understand it and enjoy it. It is even held by many good teachers that this is also the last thing, — a position of considerable strength, provided the term "understand" is sufficiently comprehensive.

It can rarely be assumed that the pupil at the beginning of his high school course thoroughly understands what he reads. No matter how good his previous instruction, he reads with imperfect analytic powers, with a knowledge of words neither full nor exact, with a limited acquaintance in the fields from which literary allusions are drawn, and with an experience of life as yet far too narrow to give his reading full significance. His knowledge of literary form and his ability to perceive relations are slight. When he reads simple stories, like *Silas Marner*, he gets the story, the motives of the action, and the

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[1] See REGENTS' BULLETIN, Albany, June, 1897, by Richard Jones.

[2] See *The Authority of Criticism* by W. P. Trent; *Literary Criticism* by Gayley and Scott, and "The Relation of Art to Truth," by W. H. Mallock, FORUM, IX. 36.

broader differences of character. If his earlier instruction has included such things, he may see the purpose of the book as a whole, and understand a little of its structure. If he reads a poem, like *The Vision of Sir Launfal*, he may be impressed with the beauty of certain scenes, get the drift and significance of the poem as a whole, and feel some of the charm of metre and diction. If he reads an essay, like the simpler ones of Irving or Addison, he gets the thought in sentences, but seldom sees the whole essay in its developed idea.

In general, he will understand and appreciate, but in limited degree. The work of the teacher, therefore, is to lead him to understand better and to enjoy more.

In the purely intellectual side of the work there are certain definite things to be aimed at: —

(1) Words are to be learned. The diction of ordinary life has many terms with whose exact meaning the pupil is not familiar. The diction of literature being more artificial, more analytic, and richer, will include many terms either new or imperfectly known. These are to be learned in their relationships, and not as *disjecta membra*. The dictionary should become not only a familiar book, but an interesting book; there is no reason to fear a too frequent use of the dictionary. Interest in words can be cultivated by skilful discussion of their meanings and their suggestiveness. Clear paraphrasing of difficult passages should be often required. In reading Shakspere such study is of the first importance. Much of the failure in intelligent interest in this poet is due solely to the unfamiliarity of his diction.[1] Ruskin's well-known passages on this subject of knowing words should be familiar to all young readers: —

The Study of Words.

"You must get yourself into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable, letter by letter. You might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough) and remain

[1] Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexikon* should be in the possession of every secondary school.

an utterly 'illiterate,' uneducated person: but if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter, — that is to say with real accuracy, — you are forevermore in some measure an educated person."[1] This is, perhaps, an extreme statement, but there is essential truth in it. Slipshod, careless reading never raises a student to the higher level of power. He may gain vague ideas and real emotional experiences thereby, but he will not get the best that literature holds for him. What is suggested in the language of literature is greater and more beautiful than what is obviously said, so that only the most careful, thoughtful reading will reveal the beauty or the strength of the passage.

(2) Allusions must be learned. Only a few of the books read in the high school are so allusive as to make this a difficult task.[2] But even though the looking up of such references involves some labour, it is one of the things to be done. In the preceding chapter[3] the treatment of allusions has been discussed at some length. The principles there stated for the elementary school apply equally to the secondary school.

Allusions.

(3) But the study of literature which stops with the learning of words and allusions is entirely inadequate. These things are but a part of what is involved in intelligent reading. A work of literature is an art, and therefore follows certain laws of structure. These laws may not be perfectly or mechanically obeyed; but they are evident to the thoughtful reader. The order in which a topic is developed in a paragraph, the development of a theme in a story, the relations to each other of the parts of any sort of literary composition, are a part of the qualities that make it literature and therefore legitimate subjects for consideration. For the same reason the metrical structure of poetry should

Structure.

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[1] See his *Sesame and Lilies* for this and much more of the same tenor.

[2] Milton's poems and Tennyson's *The Princess* are examples of books made difficult by excessive allusiveness.

[3] See pp. 167–169.

be considered. The scansion of poetry is an easy matter (though the theories as to the nature of English verse may differ), and well worth doing for the increase of one's enjoyment of the form.

(4) Necessary as it is to understand the diction and appreciate the forms of literature, these are, after all, to be regarded only as means in the effective achievement of an end, which end is the meaning and spirit of the whole. This is the vital thing; the whole story, the whole play, the whole poem, with their significance as presentations of some thought, some mood, some phase of life. No appreciation of single parts or of particular effects is sufficient. We must know and feel the book as a whole. What does it mean? What, in a few words, would be a bare and prosaic statement of the author's idea? What is his attitude towards his theme? What are the emotions aroused? In fine, what is this thing? Of course an answer to these questions put in our own words is ridiculously inadequate compared with the idea as revealed in and through the book. But none the less such are the questions we must put to ourselves when we thoughtfully weigh what we read.

Meaning of the Book as a Whole.

In the study of any given piece of literature we may concern ourselves primarily with it as a revelation of the personality of the author, as a link in the chain of development of that type of literature, as an expression of the life and spirit of the time in which it was written, or as a work of art to be judged entirely in comparison with ideal standards.[1]

1. When we consider a piece of literature as a revelation of the author's personality, we must not only bring to it the power of analysis that makes clear the thoughts and ideals, the views of life and feelings that it represents, but must know something of the biography of the author; his other works, the conditions and influences

The Personality of the Author.

[1] See an interesting article by Professor Calvin Thomas on "Literature and Personality" in *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, XII. 1896.

of his environment, the characteristic qualities of contemporary literature, and the literary and other formative influences that immediately affected his work. In Mrs. Shelley's *Frankenstein*, for example, we have a good opportunity for such study.[1] We know the company and the circumstances in which the story was conceived, the literary models that were in immediate influence over the circle of which she was a part, the philosophical ideas in which she was reared; and we can see these things abundantly reflected in her development of the story. In George Eliot's works we can see her democratic sympathies, her scientific and philosophical interests, and her attitude of protest against the false and restricted conventions of thought. In Tennyson we find a respect for law working by evolutionary processes and a belief in the ultimate elevation of humanity. How different Milton was from the proverbial psalm-singing Puritan of satire and story lies on the surface in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. The dominant mental attitudes of Dickens, Thackeray, and Browning are familiar to all their thoughtful readers.

The examples here cited at once suggest our first difficulty: that of discriminating between the individuality of the particular author and the spirit of the time in which he lived. Such discrimination, calling for keen powers of analysis and full knowledge of the intellectual life of the time, is not a task for school boys. We must be content if they gather a sense of what the author was, what he thought and felt, without attempting the measure of his originality.

But the acquaintance with a great author means yet more. Professor Dowden well summarizes it in his excellent essay on *The Interpretation of Literature*:[2] —

"From each work of a great author we advance to his total work, and thence to the man himself, — to the heart and brain from which all this manifold world of wisdom and wit and passion and beauty has proceeded. Here

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[1] See Mrs. Shelley's Introduction to the story.

[2] See this essay in his *Transcripts and Studies*. London. 1888.

again, before we address ourselves to the interpretation of the author's mind, we patiently submit ourselves to a vast series of impressions. And in accordance with Bacon's maxim that a prudent interrogation is the half of knowledge, it is right to provide ourselves with a number of well-considered questions which we may address to our author. Let us cross-examine him as students of mental and moral science, and find replies in his written words. Are his senses vigorous and fine? Does he see colour as well as form? Does he delight in all that appeals to the sense of hearing, — the voices of Nature, and the melody and harmonies of the art of man? Thus Wordsworth, exquisitely organized for enjoying and interpreting all natural, and, if we may so say, homeless and primitive sounds, had little feeling for the delights of music. Can he enrich his poetry by gifts from the sense of smell, as did Keats; or is his nose, like Wordsworth's, an idle promontory projecting into a desert air? Has he, like Browning, a vigorous pleasure in all strenuous muscular movements; or does he, like Shelley, live rapturously in the finest nervous thrills? How does he experience and interpret the feeling of sex, and in what parts of his entire nature does that feeling find its elevating connections and associations? What are his special intellectual powers? Is his intellect combative or contemplative? What are the laws which chiefly preside over the associations of his ideas? What are the emotions which he feels most strongly, and how do his emotions coalesce with one another? Wonder, terror, awe, love, grief, hope, despondency, the benevolent affections, admiration and religious sentiment, the moral sentiment, the emotion of power, irascible emotion, ideal emotion — how do these make themselves felt in and through his writings? What is his feeling for the beautiful, the sublime, the ludicrous? Is he of weak or vigorous will? In the conflict of motives, which class of motives with him is likely to predominate? Is he framed to believe or framed to doubt? Is he prudent, just, temperate, or the reverse of these? These and like questions are not to be crudely and formally proposed, but are to be used with tact; nor should the critic press for hard and definite answers, but know how skilfully to glean its meaning from an evasion. He is a dull cross-examiner who will invariably follow the scheme which he has thought out and prepared beforehand, and who cannot vary his questions to surprise or beguile the truth from an unwilling witness. But the tact which comes from natural

gift and from experience may be well supported by something of method, — method well hidden away from the surface and from sight."

2. We may be interested in that form of comparative study which considers a piece of literature in its place in the development of the type. *The De Coverley Papers* forecast the emergence of the modern novel from the essay on men and manners,[1] and Goldsmith carries the development a little further in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, though still encumbered with the essayist's attitude of mind. *Macbeth* and *King Lear* are higher forms of art than their predecessors, the "tragedies of blood" of a few years earlier. So in the various forms of English Literature there is evident a continuous series of changes, sometimes in the development to more perfect types, sometimes in the decadence of perfected types. These changes are evident in both form and content.

The Development of Types,

(1) In form, such work as that of Fielding in the eighteenth century and Jane Austen in the nineteenth century are excellent examples of progress towards a definite organic structure unknown to the early periods of English prose fiction. Certain metrical developments, like the blank verse of Shakspere and Milton and the heroic couplets of Dryden and Pope; the clear and direct prose of the eighteenth century, and the equally clear and more flowing prose of the nineteenth century, are examples of another development in form.

in Form,

(2) More interesting to most readers is the development of ideas and their expression in literature. What Addison and Steele tell us of the thought and feeling of the London of Queen Anne, what Jane Austen and Shelley and Byron give us of the forms of thought a century later, and the full light thrown upon the intellectual life of England by later poets and novelists, are matters of surpassing interest.[2]

and Content.

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1 See Cross's *Development of the English Novel*, New York, 1900.

2 See, for example, Vida D. Scudder's *Social Ideals in English Literature*, Boston, 1900.

(3) The judgment of a piece of literature is, by general admission, most fascinating and most difficult. Every book we read challenges us to a critical estimate, and all of us, no matter how unqualified we may be by native gifts and experience, respond to the challenge by making our estimate of its value. And yet, though we are thus constrained to pass judgment upon our literary as upon our other experiences, the history of contemporary criticism presents a series of blunders perhaps more egregious and amusing than any other field of thought. With a few brilliant exceptions, the only safe criticism is the result of the accumulated verdicts of several generations. Nor is the criticism of books seen in their due perspective of time in much better case. Where there is agreement that the book or the author is great, there is the widest difference as to what the nature of the greatness is. Shakspere is variously commended for his art, his wisdom, or his learning; and those who find one of these qualities often deny or ignore the others. Such difficulties proceed in part from the lack of agreement in the fundamentals of æsthetics, in part from the personal bias which enters so largely into our appreciation of any form of art, in part from general ignorance of the field in which the criticism is made, in part from the lack of mental powers and of that peculiar sensitiveness which is a lesser form of the same qualities that make the poet. Notwithstanding the limitation upon our power of criticism, it is neither to be expected nor desired that we should cease to exercise our judgment. The judgment grows by exercise even of a crude sort. What is to be deprecated is a readiness to form dogmatic conclusions, and to ignore the value of wide knowledge and experience.

Critical Study.

As a matter of fact, in most of our thoughtful reading we are interested in all the foregoing questions. We seek to know the author better and to get his peculiar message for us, to place the book in its proper relation in the historical development in our literature, and to judge of its actual value as a revelation of life and a thing of beauty. Different works do, however, interest us in greater degrees in one or other of these

topics: sometimes it is the historical aspect, sometimes the personal element, sometimes the mere beauty of the work that attracts us.

The selection of the present uniform series of books known as "the college entrance requirements" is discussed elsewhere. As they form the bulk of the English curriculum in most schools, and as they also include all the types of literature that are studied, — the novel, the essay, the lyric, the romantic narrative poem, and the drama, — with the distinctive traits of most of the literary groups from Shakspere to Tennyson, it will be most convenient to discuss the teaching of literature through them as examples.

The Study of the Novel.

In fiction the primary interest is in the story. To get a full and clear knowledge of the story is the first thing. Such knowledge must include a vivid imagining of the action, and a perception of the order and arrangement of the incidents, — particularly where they are related as cause and effect. To decry the interest in the mere story is to misapprehend the value and purpose of this form of art. In good fiction the story is the embodiment of the author's view of some phase of human life, given not in abstract terms but as a concrete vision. Its great value lies not only in its powerful appeal to our interest and its effect upon our emotions, but also in the persistence with which it lives in our memory, ready to take on new and deeper meaning as we reinterpret it in the light of wider experience and deeper thought. What the later centuries with their modified points of view have added to the meaning of such works as *Don Quixote* and *The Merchant of Venice*, the individual man may do with the memories of stories read in his boyhood.

The plot should be studied not only to be known as a story, but in its structure, as a thing of parts skilfully built to produce a unified effect.[1] The introduction, in its function of

[1] See the volume on *Narration*, by W. T. Brewster, New York, 1895, and the bibliography there given for the study of narration. See also

fixing the story in time and place, of presenting the characters, or of giving the tone of the narrative, or of all these functions, should be noted. The development of the plot by incident, the interweaving of principal and subordinate plots and their points of contact, the arrangement of the action in certain large and vivid scenes, with lesser incidents between, as in *Ivanhoe*, the climax of the action, and the unravelling of the plot to its *dénouement* should be carefully noted. Throughout all such study the question of the probability of the action,[1] its truth to human life, and its use of ordinary or extraordinary means, will serve to stimulate interest and understanding. It is worth while to ask, for example, whether so skilful and probable a story as *Silas Marner* is not impaired by the employment of the hero's cataleptic trances in the two crises of his history, or by the use of the stone-pit for the obvious convenience of the author in abstracting and restoring the hero's gold at convenient seasons; or whether the probability of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, as a spiritual experience, is impaired by the impossibility of its material events.

The Plot.

Structure.

Closely related to the study of plot is that of character. In the higher type of narrative, the interest in plot is bound up with the interest in character: plot is the means by which character is set forth and developed, the author's medium of portraying human life. In the study of fiction, therefore, we note the interaction between plot and character; we are interested in seeing how each affects or determines the other. The portrayal of character is also interesting apart from the plot. The celebrated characters of literature are types of human nature, throwing into high relief its various phases. By acquaintance with them we not only widen our knowledge of the world of men and women about

Character.

Crawshaw's *Interpretation of Literature*, New York, 1896, and *The Study of Prose Fiction*, by Bliss Perry, Boston, 1902.

[1] See Chapters II. and III. in Butcher's *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, London, 1896, and Woodberry's *Heart of Man*, New York, 1900.

us, but become more definitely conscious of what we ourselves are, actually or potentially. Each of us finds in himself the counterpart of the simple Vicar, the ambitious Macbeth, the unreasonable Lear, or even the witty, boastful, and evasive Falstaff.

It is not to be expected that pupils in the secondary school will make minute analysis of traits of character. Such a requirement usually leads them into vague attempts at classification and dulls their interest. But they can be led to see and name the salient points, to note how the character is made to reveal himself, and to see in the revelation some phase of our common human nature, either in the type as it stands or in the relationship held by the character to the life about him.

But plot and character in their interrelations are, as has been said, the means by which the author presents his thoughts and feelings about life, that is, his interpretation of life. What this large effect of the story is, may well be considered. We must ask, What does the work mean as a whole? What is the author's own dominant interest in the story? Where do his sympathies lie? How would he state his idea in simple form, if, like Hawthorne in his *American Notes*, he had made jottings of ideas to be embodied in stories? It is not assumed here that every story has a moral purpose. The author's aim may be as purely æsthetic as is that of the artist who paints a rose. Between Scott and George Eliot one feels a wide difference in ethical interest. But it is just as pertinent to ask ourselves the aim and interest in a romance by the former as in a novel by the latter.

Interpretation.

In the study of fiction as here suggested, the teacher must exercise a large freedom. Some books may be touched lightly, others in greater detail; in the same book different parts will receive quite different degrees of attention. Above all things, the work must not become formal and mechanical, but must keep alive the interest in the movement and meaning of the story. As an example of the fuller treatment an analysis of

Chapter XII. of *Silas Marner* may be taken.[1] The pupils may be asked to note how the introductory sentence is transitional; what motives had driven Godfrey's wife forth on her errand; what her life and experience had been, and how these extenuated her wrong-doing; what part mere chance had in the entrance of the child; what memories of recent and remote events drew Silas to the child; what part his simple and superstitious nature had in the event; what point the story has now reached in its development; what skill the author shows in analyzing mental states, and in giving a clear picture.

Variety of Treatment.

Reference has already been made to the various types of literature represented in the ordinary high school course. Within the field of fiction we have the psychological novel in *Silas Marner*, the historical romance in *Ivanhoe*, and the novel of men and manners closely related to the essay in *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Each of these types naturally demands a somewhat different treatment. In the first, the interest is mainly in plot and its relation to the evolution of character; in the second it is the creation of an interesting and romantic story, wherein appear the life and ideals of a vanished age; in the third, the portrayal of a group of characters with the simple foibles and virtues of the author, and their behaviour in adversity.

Silas Marner: its Theme.

It is well to have, in teaching any book, some large aim which shall be coincident with the author's own purpose. Such an aim George Eliot has given in *Silas Marner*. In the quotation prefixed she announces her theme:

> "A child, more than all other gifts
> That earth can offer to declining man,
> Brings hope with it and forward looking thoughts."

This is the idea exemplified in the story, and in its skilful working out appear the excellent structure, genuine feeling, and real insight of the book.

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[1] Many of the college entrance requirements texts now have excellent lists of questions suggestive of topics and points of view.

In the beginning there must be a situation of hopelessness. This is brought about by depriving the hero at one blow of his friendship, his love, and his religion. That he may lose these he is made simple and helpless in the catastrophe that befalls him. That he may continue estranged from his fellow-men, he is placed in a new environment, where strangers are rare, where both his appearance and his craft seem strange, and where even the forms of religion are unintelligible to him. Here his estrangement is at once fixed by his growing love of gold, even while we see that the heart of the man is sound because he still has need of something to love. When the time draws near for his regeneration, he is first deprived of his gold, and then given the child to love under circumstances which link it peculiarly with his love for his gold and with the tenderest memories of his own childhood. From this point on the story concerns itself with the gradual reunion of Silas with his fellow-men, in the resumption of the right and normal relations through the influence of the child.

Subordinate Parts.

The secondary plot, the story of the Cass family, is made to touch the main story in a natural and effective way for developing the character of Silas: in the theft of the money, in the appearance of the child, and finally in the opportunity given to Eppie to reward her foster-father's love. While subordinate to the main plot, the story of the house of Cass has also its own meaning and purpose. The episodes which reveal the simple community life, though brief and infrequent, are worth study for their humorous sympathy, their skilful portrayal of character, and their representation of simple rustic life.

The Author's Points of View.

The personality of the author as expressed in her sympathies and interests is easily to be seen. She touches the ignorance and prejudices of these rustic folk with a broad and kindly spirit, whether dealing with their foibles or their untutored religious beliefs; she is deeply interested in the problems of right living, and in showing not only the relation between the characters and their environ-

ment, but also their development under these influences; her method is not only to present, but to explain; and her attitude towards the life she presents includes those of both the artist and the philosophical thinker. In these things she was of the nineteenth century, with its scientific interests and its social and humanitarian sympathies.[1]

The Historical Romance.

The historical romance, represented in the curriculum in *Ivanhoe* and *The Last of the Mohicans*, has been justly regarded as a type of special importance. This importance is due to the fact that it is one of the most interesting types to the juvenile mind, and to the relationship between it and the more exact subject of history.

1. Its interest for young people lies in its strong action, "high speeches," and strenuous ideals, and in part in the impression it is able to create of being a "true story." Reaching, as it does in the best instances, the higher standards of art, it is therefore one of the best means of cultivating a genuine love of reading, and as such should not only hold a place in the curriculum, but should be made the definite starting-point for further incursions into the field of historical fiction, whether prose or poetry. The ballad, the battle lyric, the metrical romance, and the epic can be shown to be artistic presentations of ideas and feelings that have their ultimate roots in or have clustered round some definite historical experience, and therefore to have a kind of obvious reality.

2. Its relationship to history is frequently alleged as the ground upon which to base the teaching of the historical novel. It is argued (1) that it will impart many valuable historical ideas, (2) that it will incite to further historical study and investigation. Counter arguments are also made to the effect (1) that it is utterly unreliable as history,[2] and is therefore not

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[1] One of the best studies of George Eliot is by Frederic Harrison, in *Early Victorian Literature*, London and New York, 1895; printed also in the FORUM, vol. xx.

[2] See Freeman's *Methods of Historical Study*, New York, 1886, and his *Norman Conquest*, New York, 1880, for an opinion on the historicity of *Ivanhoe*.

only worthless but injurious, because it presents the false ideas so attractively, and (2) that the pupil is more likely to rest content with the fascinating falsehood than to go in search of the dry truth. Amid such conflicting opinions the truth is not easy to discover. It may, however, be maintained (1) that much of the matter in good historical novels is true history, though mingled with error, (2) that history is thereby rendered more attractive because it is interpreted and made more human, and (3) that pupils will sometimes be incited by the historical novel to a further reading of history.

But all this discussion seems to me to miss the main point. The historical novel is literature, and as literature it is to be judged and taught. Like all other literature, its fundamental interest is in human experience, its fundamental purpose to present human experience in an attractive, coherent, convincing manner, and to keep itself true to human nature. The mixture of dates in Shakspere's *King Henry the Eighth*[1] does invalidate the play as history, but does not impair its truth as a presentation of human character. The story is worked out with a verisimilitude of fact and a truth to human nature which are of a high order of art. The whole question must be carried back to the time-honoured distinction between historic and poetic truth.[2] As Aristotle pointed out, the poet — and the plea includes the novelist — is not concerned so much with a true record of fact as with a presentation of human life that shall be true in that it faithfully represents human nature. It is the old distinction between fact and truth, between the real and the ideal.

It must be granted, however, that the novelist who chooses a historical field thereby conditions his freedom. While he gains in interest by selecting what is already known to his

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[1] See the list of misplaced events given in the notes of the Rolfe edition, New York, 1894.

[2] See Butcher's *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, London and New York, 1896; Mallock's "The Relation of Art to Truth," FORUM, IX. 36, and Paul Leicester Ford's "The Historical Novel," ATLANTIC MONTHLY, December, 1897.

readers, and in apparent truth by keeping within the range of known historical facts, he runs the risk of forfeiting our belief by distortion of facts with which we are familiar. Anachronisms are harmless to the unlearned or in unknown fields; but they are disturbing when they overturn our settled and familiar memories; and the novelist is expected to convey a true general impression of the life and spirit of the period he presents. Thus the necessity of historical accuracy in fiction is seen to be in a certain ratio to the general historical information of the reader. It was of less value to Shakspere than to Scott, and of less value to Scott than to any one of the present generation of historical romancers.

If the foregoing arguments are valid, we should select for the curriculum the historical novels which are the best as novels, and treat them in the same way as other types of fictitious narrative. The impossibility of Cooper's Red Man as a historical concept is perhaps a blemish, but the truth of his books to the spirit of pioneer life is an excellence to offset many blemishes. With all his antiquarian interests and achievements,[1] Scott had not the point of view of the modern scientific historian; but he had a spacious imagination, a capacious and well-filled memory, a wholesome spirit, true insight into human nature, and the creative powers of a great artist.

Ivanhoe.

A few suggestions may be permitted here as to the treatment of *Ivanhoe*. In structure it contains a few great scenes, the intervals between these filled with minor incidents leading up to or growing out of the larger scenes; where it is merely episodic, there is sufficient interest in the episodes to justify their presence. It is full of detailed reproduction of a vanished age, with its customs, manners, and ideals. Its characters are diverse, often strongly drawn, but unequal in treatment, the more chivalrous types being gener-

[1] The introductions to his novels show that Scott constantly strove to present life either as he believed it to have been in history or as he saw it in his own time.

ally inferior in vividness to the wicked or the homely. Its action is free and varied, its spirit romantic, its tone as wholesome as the forest air breathed by Robin Hood and his band, though it has no ethical purpose, and can hardly be said to have any definite theme. It is, above all things, a story told in a succession of interesting pictures. These considerations should determine its treatment. Collateral reading of other tales of chivalry, information upon points relating to interesting customs and ideas here presented, and pictures to help in realizing the ideas, will often be of value. But it is not to be studied minutely: nothing of Scott's is. It is to be read, imagined, enjoyed. Its diction and its structure are possibly the only things that require any study; and these are not difficult. The book will be of most value if the teacher can come to know its qualities more fully than we have outlined them, and bring the class to know the story well and to enter into its spirit.

The Vicar of Wakefield.

The Vicar of Wakefield differs widely in type from the books just discussed. With adults it is almost safe to say that enjoyment of this classic is a test of a cultivated mind, but it is by no means so sure to please boys and girls. It presupposes a mellowness of judgment and a fulness of experience which few young minds can of themselves reach by imaginative sympathy. Its theme, similar to that of the *Book of Job*, is clear enough and interesting enough, but so badly developed, so full of improbabilities and cheap devices of plot that it wins scant respect from young readers. Its frequent essay-like digressions render it tedious to them; and its philosophy of life is somewhat too mild and simple for their crude taste. And yet the book may be successfully taught. It is recommended that in this one instance the teacher begin with the biography of the author. The lives of Goldsmith written by Irving, William Black,[1] and Austin Dobson[2] should first be well known by the teacher; then such

[1] English Men of Letters Series, London and New York.
[2] Great Writers Series, London.

gleanings regarding Goldsmith as may be found in Boswell and other contemporary sources. To this let him add a fair knowledge of the contemporary literary history, a familiarity with the best Goldsmith criticism, and a love of this gentle-spirited classic, and he should be ready for his work. If he begins by telling the class about the author, *personalia* being here the things of prime importance and rich enough in themselves to occupy an entire lesson, and then explains to the class that the book is not to be read for its plot, but for its reflection of the man Goldsmith, for its quiet, mellow humour, its portrayal of simple domestic virtues, and its subtle shadings of character, he will have removed from the path of the class the principal stumbling-block. These things should be kept in mind throughout the reading of the book, and recalled and reinforced as they are suggested in the course of the work. Like most works touched with humour, it is shy of the analytic spirit, and yields most pleasure when it is read aloud.

There are certain facts of literary history connected with the book which should be noticed. It stands between the completely developed novel and the essay, which is one of the literary forms out of which the modern novel emerged. It belongs also in the long series of pastoral literature beginning with Theocritus and extending its influence to our own day; and like all pastoral literature celebrates the virtues that are supposed to flourish in a life of simplicity. It stands about midway in the romantic revival which began in the first half and culminated in the end of the eighteenth century, and reflects many of the features common to that revival: tenderness, kindly humour, and sympathy with lowly life.

The De Coverley Papers.

Midway between the novel and the essay stand *The De Coverley Papers*, easily the most famous examples of periodical literature in the English language. Without the help of a good teacher, they may seem dull to the pupils; with such help they are very interesting. They furnish such a transcript of the life of the period that historians draw freely upon them. Reinforced by other numbers of *The Spectator* and by references to the social

life of the period in other sources,[1] the book becomes an attractive medium of entrance to this interesting period of history; its political interests, its coffee-houses, theatres and pleasure gardens, its rough sports, its exaggerated fashions, its frank interest in the things of this world, move vividly before us. No less interesting are these remarkable papers for their place in the development of literary types. In the midst of a large body of satirical and didactic literature they are conspicuous, not only for their impersonality and urbanity of tone, but for their rare success in winning large popularity among the very readers whose follies and vices they hold up to pleasant ridicule. As the beginning of the modern novel, we note the interest in contemporary life, the rudimentary plot in the club as a centre for the characters, the presentation of types of character, and especially the fine poetic idealization of the good Sir Roger.[2] It is not a book for minute study, but rather for that easier kind of reading in which one notes the graces of style and character, while he sees another type of civilization than his own paraded before him as an interesting spectacle.

The Essay.

The essays in the college entrance requirement list are of the biographical and critical type now rare in our contemporary literature of criticism, but of considerable interest historically. The two of Macaulay[3] deal with the life and work of men who are otherwise represented in the same list. Obviously there is good reason for reading

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[1] See especially John Ashton's *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, W. C. Sydney's *England and the English in the Eighteenth Century*, Traill's *Social England*, IV., Frances Burney's *Evelina*, and Green's *History of the English People*.

[2] See Cross, *The Development of the English Novel*, New York, 1900, and Walter Raleigh's *The English Novel*, New York, 1895.

[3] The essays on *Milton* and *Addison*. The essay on *Johnson* has recently been substituted for the former. The wisdom of this substitution I am inclined to doubt. The historical interest, the lifelike pictures of the Puritans and the Cavaliers, and the clear argument in the former are not equalled by anything in the latter. The main ground of objection to the essay on *Milton*, its false theory of poetry, can easily be removed by any teacher who knows his subject well enough to make an appeal to the facts.

them not too remotely from the works they criticise. What Macaulay thinks of the work and character of these two men will be our principal interest. His impressions are to be clearly understood and compared with those already formed by the class, and, it may be, with critical judgments found elsewhere. His estimate of the man as apart from his work and as expressed in his work is to be clearly grasped. In fact, in these, as in all the books, understanding the *content* is the first and most important thing.

Macaulay.

But besides the content, the form and method are to be somewhat carefully studied. Each essay is built upon a clear plan, easily divisible into large sections, and these sections again into smaller topics. The transitions between them are clear and natural. The minor units, paragraph and sentence, are also to be considered. The topics or topic-sentences of paragraphs should be found; the method of clear and orderly development, usually from the general to the particular, from the abstract to the concrete, by which Macaulay makes his paragraphs not merely units but pictures, should be noted. His frequent use of the antithesis, his terseness of sentence structure, and other obvious qualities of his style should be seen.

Style.

But the study of style has its dangers in the secondary school. It is not of much interest to boys and girls, and must be dealt with not only in moderation but, above all, in that clear and rational method of study which avoids meaningless generalizations and cites definite instances within the comprehension of the class. If we bear in mind that "English is one subject," we shall want to make prominent always the *value* of this or that point of style in rendering expression effective. In the present disposition to rehabilitate Macaulay's it is again safe to reiterate that he is one of the very best authors from whom to learn to write. His clearness, his lack of subtlety, his comparative uniformity of method are, pedagogically speaking, good; and even his faults are of that obvious kind which cannot mislead the master or do injury to the apprentice.

What has been said above about Macaulay's essays applies in part to the study of Carlyle's *Essay on Burns*. Here, too, the content is the main thing, and familiarity with some of the work of the poet criticised is essential. Although this essay does not afford such valuable opportunities for detailed study, the study of the structure of the whole essay and of the paragraphs will naturally be made.

Carlyle.

Although belonging to oratory rather than to the essay, Burke's *Speech on Conciliation* will, we believe, be best studied along the lines indicated above. The student will need to know the history involved, and to note the skilful way in which Burke marshals facts and arguments, anticipates and answers objections, and reaches the feelings by appealing to the convictions of his audience. The other essays form good examples through which to make clear the principles of exposition; this serves to illustrate both exposition and argument.

Burke.

In general, the essay is not an attractive form of literature to young readers. But a plan of study which makes it yield ideas can secure respect for it and go far towards making it agreeable. In fact, though the essay has not the attractiveness of a poem or a story to imaginative children, it does have an obvious intellectual weight and definiteness which put it alongside the serious work in other subjects of the curriculum.

To many good teachers of English the teaching of poetry is a peculiar pleasure, to others a peculiar difficulty. As poetry is more condensed than prose, more allusive and indirect, more imaginative and more dependent upon form, it is harder to read, and therefore affords more opportunities to the teacher; as it is more subtle, more intangible, more in the realm of emotion and less in the realm of exact intellectual activities, it is less subject to treatment by any prescribed method. Of course we know that it is to be understood and appreciated. But the mere understanding of it is so bound up with emotional experiences, that explaining it is often as impossible for the teacher as for the pupil: the explanation of poetry is often worse than the explanation

The Teaching of Poetry.

of humour. Much of the pleasure in reading poetry comes in the perception of the exquisite blending of musical speech, beauty of picture and emotional tone. But neither this nor any other summary of the qualities of poetry is adequate. The wide range of effects attained can be known only by familiarity with good poetry and good interpretative criticism. A survey of the many good editions now in print of the college entrance books, with their notes and questions for students and teachers, will of itself convince that there is much that is both definite and stimulating to be done in the study of poetry. In spite of the difficulties of the work, there are many teachers as successful in the interpretative study of poetry in the classroom as are the critics in their essays. The task of the teacher is, indeed, not essentially different from that of the writer of interpretative studies, except in the methods of approach.

Narrative poems demand the same treatment as to theme, structure, character, and general tone as do prose narratives. What they have beyond these in finish of expression and imaginative glamour may also be felt and pointed out. Few poems present all these qualities in so high degree as *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. Its theme is clear and definite, its structure orderly and compact, its finish of expression almost faultless, and the imaginative glamour almost unique. There are so many things to be noted in studying it that there is danger of giving it too much rather than too little time. Some of the most obvious things may here be mentioned. Its style is like the ballads, to which form it is akin; swift in movement, terse in expression, giving few but suggestive details, so that it requires careful reading and an alert imagination. Its simplicity of language, its richness in rhyme effects, its perfection of rhythm, and its striking use of repetitions are to be noted. From the beginning the presence of the supernatural in its theme is indicated in the manner of the Mariner. It begins and ends with the wedding feast and the unwilling auditor as an every-day background, keeps constantly before us the idea of the Mariner's

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.

crime in the violation of the higher law of kindliness,[1] and leads us on into the story as worked out in the hero's conscience not only by his sufferings but by all the supernatural machinery of the poem. Its climax or turning-point, where the Mariner's hardness of heart is melted and he can love any living creature, is expressed again in the poet's own interpretation of his tale, —

> "He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things, both great and small."

There are three things in the poem which frequently interfere with the enjoyment of it by young readers: its condensed style, its grisly horrors, and its impossible setting. The first should be no great obstacle, if there be required a careful reading, assisted by wise and skilful suggestions from the teacher. The second is likely to loom up large: it sometimes seems that the poet has revelled in mere horrors; but the teacher can show their place in working out the Mariner's change of heart, and their fitness in a tale of the untravelled waste of sea, around which superstitious horrors have always gathered; and he can dwell upon the many passages of pure beauty until these latter overcome the others in the pupil's mind. To an imaginative child the third point offers no more difficulty than the usual machinery of fairyland. But the more prosaic type of pupil may demand some reason for all this supernatural machinery. He must be brought to see that literature is concerned primarily, not with the natural facts of external nature, but with the experiences of the human soul; that its claim to wide liberty in dealing with the material world has been long conceded; and that in the present instance the subversion of the laws of the external world not only helps to create the imaginative glamour which is one of the charms of the poem, but, by keeping in close and constant parallel with the mental experiences of the Mariner, serves also to impress upon us the emotions that he felt, — is, in brief, an artistic

[1] See, for example, how each of the several parts closes with a reference to the albatross.

method of making those experiences concrete and vivid. The first appeal in literature is usually to the imagination and the emotions. But if the way to these needs to be prepared by an appeal to the reason, there can surely be no objection to such an approach.

The Princess.

Among the difficult books to teach is Tennyson's *The Princess*. Its theme not only lies without the usual range of interests of secondary pupils, but often seems to them a mere making of words over nothing. The story itself is so overlaid with ornament and allusion that it is not easy to follow; and the mixture of ancient and modern, of serious and burlesque, taxes their patience. On the other hand, the poem is so permeated with the thought and feeling of the nineteenth century that it can be brought within the comprehension and approval of most pupils. First, the story should be read and known clearly. Then its theme, or quest, and the author's answer to the problem can be considered. After this the art of the poem should be studied. The medley element, consisting not merely in the composite manner of narration, but also in its mixture of ancient and modern, of serious and absurd, and in its union of different types of poetry, lyric, romantic, epic, and pastoral,[1] can be shown to be an appropriate form of art in which to present the half-serious, half-absurd problem of the poem. The function of the songs sung by the women in the interludes, and presenting the ideals of love of men and women and their love for childhood, can be pointed out, and their lyric beauty be felt and remembered. The fitness of the characters, various types clearly drawn, for working out the theme, can be shown. A forecast of the form, the spirit, and the material is seen in the prologue. The humour, varying from keen satire to the most delicate and good-humoured banter, should be noted; and the prejudice against the poem which girls are prone to feel on this account be removed by calling their attention to

[1] See the song, "Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height."

the fact that neither sex escapes the banter, and that the cause of women is really treated with chivalrous consideration. The poem is rich in allusions and memories of other literature; so rich, indeed, that only a part of its wealth can be appreciated by young readers. It is rich also in pictures, "the purple patches" in which form, colour, and sound unite in composite effects of a high order.[1] While it is conceded that the poem is difficult to teach, it can be maintained not only that the poem can be and often is well taught, but that few things in the curriculum have as great cultural value as this rich, high-wrought, beautiful classic.

The minor poems of Milton which appear in the "college entrance list" are *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Lycidas*, and *Comus*.[2] The first two are simple in theme, and of obvious unity in purpose and effect. It can be shown how the mood in each is presented simply by the selection of appropriate details;[3] how the two poems are parallel in structure while opposite in effect; and how each of them reflects Milton the lover of books, art, and nature rather than Milton the Puritan. The beauty of individual passages will hardly need to be pointed out. But the allusions and the archaic diction will demand some serious study: how much, the teacher must judge for each class, that he may strike the right mean between too little and too much.

Milton's Minor Poems.

Lycidas is a difficult poem. Its unity is by no means apparent, and has often been doubted in quarters of high authority; unity of tone it certainly has not. Its diction and machinery, literary and conventional in the highest degree, are the descendants of a long line of pastoral poetry, very little of which is known to the secondary pupil. It is as condensed[4] as it is possible for good English to be, and neither its theme nor its spirit is near to modern

Lycidas.

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[1] See especially the closing lines in Parts II. and III.

[2] It is to be regretted that some of Milton's great sonnets have not been included.

[3] See Newman's *Aristotle's Poetics*, New York, 1894.

[4] See Ruskin's analysis, cited above, p. 252.

readers. On the other hand, its beauty of verse and picture catch the imagination and leave a sense of dignity rarely surpassed; no pupil of sensibility can regard this poem with contempt. To be understood and enjoyed it must be studied; its pastoral machinery must be translated, mentally at least, into ordinary and modern forms of thought, until the words of the poem come to convey at once and directly to the reader the ideas that Milton had. If it is not enjoyed then, the blame rests in the same places as does the responsibility for the pupil's mental endowments and his previous training.

Comus.

Comus is equally difficult: its high and impassioned oratory and imagery are condensed and philosophical; of character and action it has little or none; its theme arouses no special interest. Its dignity and sonorousness of diction, and a certain awesomeness in its general tone, the pupil can feel. If it is read mainly for these qualities, and as a monument of a vanished form of art standing somewhere between the drama and the opera, it is more likely to be appreciated than if read for the story or for the human interest. Like the other minor poems of Milton here discussed, it should certainly leave behind it a respect for its beauty and intellectual weight, and convince the pupil that the highest pleasures in literature are not to be had without the price of labor.

The Drama.

A drama is more difficult to read than a story. Action, description, and motive are usually given directly in narrative writing; in the drama they are given indirectly or left to the reader's inference. The form, broken into scenes and acts, is harder to imagine as a unified whole than the more continuous form of narrative. In general, the teacher will have to see to it that the pupil understands the characters in their relation to the action, and the separate scenes in their relation to the whole play.

For illustration of these and other things to be considered in the drama, the following topics are chosen from *Macbeth*:—

1. The source of the story, its original form, and its modification in Shakspere's hands.

Macbeth.

2. The opening scenes, giving in their natural environment and in the introduction of the Witches a sort of keynote to the play.

3. The position of Macbeth, the promises of the Witches, the fulfilment of a part of these promises, and the stirring of more ambitious hopes in him.

4. The evidences for and against the belief that Macbeth had conceived the murder before he met the Witches; the nature and degree of his responsibility.

5. Lady Macbeth's part in inciting him to the crime; her methods and her motives.

6. The descriptive elements attending the crime: means of arousing terror, such as the sounds that Macbeth hears in the murder scene and the knocking at the gate.

7. Macbeth's character: his fears of the uncertain or unknown, his excitable imagination, the nature of his scruples, his motives; how these are employed later in leading him to his destruction.

8. The part of Banquo in the first and second acts.

9. The change in Macbeth's motives, terror added to ambition; the recklessness with which he plunges into crime on his own initiative.

10. The change in Lady Macbeth.

11. The banquet scene: how prepared for in preceding scenes, how made effective, its part in determining the future of Macbeth.

12. Macduff as the leader of the avenging force. Where he first appears in this light, and his actions in succeeding scenes.

13. Lady Macbeth's diminishing prominence in the play: her break-down; the sleep-walking scene, how made effective.

14. The irony or Nemesis in the play: how it is shown that Macbeth's hopes are disappointed, his deeds react upon himself, and his troubles spring ultimately from what was in himself at the beginning of the play.

15. Macbeth as a tragic hero: how far he satisfies the accepted canons of dramatic criticism.

These few topics out of many that might be suggested will serve to illustrate the richness of the drama as a subject of study. Free discussion, taking in all parts of the play, should be encouraged. It is most essential that pupils should read carefully, know clearly the meanings of the sentences, and learn to bring to the interpretation of one part of the play what they have found in another. In the drama as in other forms of poetry, the beauties of individual passages should be noted. Some of the speeches of Macbeth are proverbial for their high order of imaginative beauty.

Questions of Method.

In all his teaching of literature the problem of the teacher begins, not with questions of method, but with matters of fact and interpretation. If he knows his literature well, critically and in its historical relations, and if he has an alert and sympathetic type of mind, he has the best equipment for teaching it. But there are, nevertheless, certain questions of method to be considered, — questions which rest in part upon the literature chosen and in part upon the class to be taught. The principal point of doubt seems to be with regard to the amount of discussion and analytic work. Theories vary from a belief in merely reading the literature aloud in the classroom [1] to the advocacy of minute and searching questions upon every detail of the work.[2] In support of the first point of view it is often argued that literature appeals through the ear to the emotions, and that any intellectual treatment, analytic or otherwise, kills the spirit of it. The advocates of the second method seem to assume that every piece of good literature is a perfect work, a mosaic in which every word and idea have a definite and inevitable function which analysis will reveal.

From both these extreme views I dissent. I believe that in the mere reading much of the best of a work is not appre-

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[1] See Corson, *The Aims of Literary Study*.

[2] See, for example, Sherman's *Analytics of Literature*, Boston, 1892.

hended; and I repose my belief not only on experience, but upon the endorsement of many wise men, from Bacon down to the present time. I dissent also from the theory that the intellectual activities necessarily kill emotion and destroy æsthetic pleasure. One needs only note the enthusiasm with which lovers of music and painting analyze effects and the means of producing them to see the inherent unsoundness of this generalization. The poets, too, have often been the best critics, dwelling with interest upon the details of their own and others' work. It must not be forgotten that a large part of æsthetic pleasure proceeds from the activity of a trained mind: the perception of symmetry and unity, of the nice adjustment of means to ends, and of the fine sense of fitness between the parts of a work, is one of the highest rewards of the study of literature. It is a significant fact that the sentimentalists in the world of letters are usually formless and inchoate in their expression; and it is a sentimental or an indolent mind that will not deal with literature on any other footing than an emotional one. It is true, of course, that there are some things that defy analysis, and other things that need none; there are lyrics, for example, whose message goes straight to the heart and whose beauty eludes study. But these are not typical of literature in general; most of it is best enjoyed when it satisfies not only the feelings but also the reason. Few living writers have a more unquestioned rank in scholarship and taste than Dr. Furness, the Shaksperian scholar. His opinion on this point is characteristic and interesting: [1] —

"We read our Shakespeare in varying moods. Hours there are, and they come to all of us, when we want no voice, charm it never so wisely, to break in upon Shakespeare's own words. If there be obscurity, we rather like it; if the meaning be veiled, we prefer it veiled. Let the words flow on in their own sweet cadence, lulling our senses, charming our ears, and let all sharp quillets cease. When Amiens' gentle voice sings of

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[1] Introduction to *As You Like It*, edited by Dr. Horace Howard Furness, Philadelphia, 1892.

the winter wind that 'its tooth is not so keen because it is not seen,' who of us ever dreams, until wearisome commentators gather mumbling around, that there is in the line the faintest flaw in 'logical sequence'? But this idle, receptive mood does not last forever. The time comes when we would fain catch every ray of light flashing from these immortal plays, and pluck the heart out of every mystery there; and, then, we listen respectfully and gratefully to every suggestion, every passing thought, which obscure passages have stirred and awakened in minds far finer than our own. Then it is that we welcome every aid which notes can supply."

What is here said of commentaries on Shakspere applies to the careful study of other classics. There is no essential conflict between study and enjoyment except to lazy minds, no essential obstacle to study except in dull minds. And both the dull and the lazy must remain without the gates of the literary garden of the Hesperides. It cannot be too often insisted that the "soft education" is not that which yields most profit, or, indeed, the truest pleasure to the student. Teachers of literature and those who write about the teaching of literature have too often assumed that this is the one field in which young students cannot be expected to unite work and pleasure; and the interesting result is often that it becomes the one field of work which they do not respect. It is held that the proof of this is that an examination cannot be given in literature. But a good teacher has many ways of finding out the pupils' comprehension and appreciation of what they have read.

On the other hand, there are degrees and kinds of analytic treatment that do kill. When analysis is pushed to the point of finding fifty questions to ask on one brief scene of a play, we grow weary, and are ready to doubt the relevancy of the work. Analytic work may err in three ways: (1) It may go into such detail as to be tedious; (2) it may assume a degree of artistry that the literature does not possess; (3) it may, and often does, lead to untenable conclusions regarding the meaning and effect of the piece of literature under study, forcing into it ideas which exist only in the mind of the analyst.

What to discuss and where to stop the teacher must decide: he needs not only a knowledge of his class, but sound scholarship, good taste, and good sense, to save him from mistakes. One general principle seems to me to cover all such study: the analysis that reveals to the pupil new meanings within his power of comprehension, and new beauties within his power of appreciation, while keeping true to the spirit and tenor of the literature as it is known to scholars, — such analysis is not only safe, but of the very essence of good teaching.

In such questioning of the meaning and spirit of the literature as is here recommended, one naturally looks — though not with slavish dependence — to the critics. Most teachers of literature are under large obligations to them. It is, I think, worth while to introduce pupils to such sources of enlightenment before they reach the college, — not to many such works, not to the inferior ones, but to a few of the best criticisms upon books which the pupils are reading or have read. There is nothing formidable about these writings, nor anything essentially different in their approach to literature from that which is made by the good teacher; they, too, are teachers who help us to see more meaning and more beauty in what we read. In general, however, they should be read after the classic itself is read.

Critical Essays.

Literary biography is uninteresting to young people, and the reasons therefor have already been stated.[1] Exceptions to this are generally due either to the special skill of the teacher or to unusual and, we may say, factitious elements in the author's life and character. The even exterior and the quiet inward activity of the man of genius do not strike the imagination of the boy. In such instances the part that is of most significance, the relation between the man's life and his work, can seldom be grasped except by a mature and cultivated mind. The main facts of the lives of

Literary Biographies.

[1] See p. 179.

our principal authors should be learned in the high school, not so much for immediate as for future use. Every man of even moderate education is expected to be able to place Shakspere and Dryden and Wordsworth. And yet, if we were fearlessly honest, might we not be brought to admit that our sensitiveness on such points is a sign not of the value of the knowledge so much as of a certain standard of mental "respectability"?

The History of English Literature.

With stronger reasons we may urge the importance of the study in the high school of the general history of English literature on both sides of the Atlantic. It is not an attractive subject to the school boy, let us frankly admit. But in its general outlines, its larger movements, it presents a development of thought and feeling more or less evidently connected with the history of the people, and constituting an interesting and valuable chapter in the history of human thought. Such an outline should be more than a mere skeleton. It should be based upon a well-written text-book, and should be accompanied with enough incursions into the principal authors to get some sense of what they are like. If such a course succeeds in making the pupil feel a little more at home in the great body of our literature, and leaves in him the feeling that there are good things to be read at his later leisure all along the line between Chaucer and Tennyson, it will have more than justified itself.

Such a course is probably best given after the reading of a number of the classics from various periods. After the class has read some of Shakspere, Milton, Addison, Goldsmith, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Scott, and Tennyson, has learned about their contemporaries and the characteristics of contemporary literature, a general survey of the three centuries would serve to fix in his mind the succession of great men and great literary movements, not as a series of isolated phenomena, but as a continuous development and an expression of the thoughts and feelings of the English people.

Part III. — College Entrance Requirements in English.

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The Present Status.

The question now arises, In what particulars, if any, should the course in English vary from the general form described when pupils intend to continue their liberal education beyond the high school? To answer this question properly it is necessary, first, to understand the present requirements in English for admission to colleges in the United States. Reference has already been made to the growth of entrance requirements in English, and to the part which they have played in secondary instruction in English. Up to

about 1875 there were few or no colleges that attempted to test candidates in this subject. By 1885 an entrance examination was already firmly established at Harvard and at several other institutions, and by 1890 the practice was widespread.[1]

At first these examinations were almost invariably conducted with a view to testing grammatical and rhetorical correctness of expression, but about 1890 it came to be more generally desired that they should also test to some extent a candidate's acquaintance with English literature. In the last decade of the century three special causes led to a widely prevalent feeling that the whole question of entrance examinations in English should be dealt with from a broader and more scientific point of view. First, the admirable *Report of the Committee of Ten* (1894) formulated, with marked success, the whole secondary work in English, and attempted to outline the essential elements of a sound entrance examination in that subject. Second, the Reports of the Committee on Composition and Rhetoric to the Board of Overseers of Harvard College (1892–1897) showed plainly that Harvard at least was apparently asking of its candidates a greater rhetorical accuracy than could ordinarily be obtained.[2] Third, the preparatory schools were completely

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[1] See W. C. Collar, "Action of the Colleges upon the Schools," EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, December, 1891.

[2] The Harvard Reports were unsatisfactory in several respects. First, the committee appointed consisted not of experts, but merely of prominent citizens with a general interest in education. Second, the methods of procedure were unscientific, and the results, though suggestive, far from definitive. Third, the intent of the reports seemed to throw the burden of blame upon the preparatory schools, though, as the college had been admitting in large numbers boys whose training was thus shown to be grossly defective, it would logically appear that the fault, as well as the remedy, lay largely with the college authorities. The reports were useful, however, in stimulating the schools to renewed efforts in raising the college standard and in bringing about a more general discussion of the question. The most interesting point involved, in our opinion, was the alleged illiteracy of American youth as compared with those of other nations and with American youth of a generation or

bewildered by the diverse requirements of the different colleges, some of which demanded rhetorical correctness in expression and others an acquaintance with English literature, and all in different degrees and on the basis of somewhat different sets of prescribed books. At this juncture the Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools of the Middle States and Maryland appointed a committee of teachers of English in various schools and colleges, to bring about if possible a uniformity of requirements among the colleges in its district. This committee wisely suggested to other similar associations the appointment of similar committees, and met in conference with them. The result was a general agreement on certain definite and uniform regulations for entrance examinations in English, which were subsequently recommended by the associations and adopted by almost all the colleges in the United States.

Of what the Requirements Consist.

The uniform requirements recommended in 1894 by the Conference, and now in general use throughout the United States, consist of an examination in composition and an examination in literature. The first is based on a list of about ten books, prescribed for "reading;" the second, on a list of four or five books, prescribed for "study." The first examination, that in composition, may be taken at the end of the third high school year; the second is usually taken at the end of the final year. The Conference has also recommended (*a*) "that in connection with the reading and study of the required books parallel or subsidiary reading be encouraged;" (*b*) "that the essentials of English grammar, even if there is no examination in that subject, be not neglected in preparatory study;" (*c*) that, in preparation for the examination in composition, "it is important that the candidate shall have been instructed in the fundamental principles of rhetoric;"

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two ago. The question of illiteracy is the real kernel of the whole matter. It is apparently capable of demonstration, one way or the other, and should be made the subject of systematic research by competent investigators.

and (*d*) that, in connection with the examination on literature, "the candidate may be required to answer questions involving the essentials of English grammar, and questions on the leading facts in the periods of English literary history to which the prescribed works belong." In brief, then, the requirements prescribe entrance examinations in composition and literature, and recommend the reading and study of other English classics, and instruction in grammar, composition, and in parts of the history of English literature.

The Conference did not intend, however, to limit the course of study in secondary schools to the mere preparation of candidates on a list of specified books, as is shown by the following supplementary resolutions, which were adopted in 1897 : —

1. That English be studied throughout the primary and secondary school courses, and, when possible, for at least three periods a week during the four years of the high school course.

2. That the prescribed books be regarded as a basis for such wider courses of English study as the schools may arrange for themselves.

3. That, where careful instruction in idiomatic English translation is not given, supplementary work to secure an equivalent training in diction and in sentence-structure be offered throughout the high school course.

4. That a certain amount of outside reading, chiefly of poetry, fiction, biography, and history, be encouraged throughout the entire school course.

5. That definite instruction be given in the choice of words, in the structure of sentences and of paragraphs, and in the simple forms of narration, description, exposition, and argument. Such instruction should begin early in the high school course.

6. That systematic training in speaking and writing English be given throughout the entire school course. That, in the high school, subjects for compositions be taken partly from the prescribed books and partly from the student's own thought and experience.

7. That each of the books prescribed for study be taught with reference to

(*a*) The language, including the meaning of words and sentences, the important qualities of style, and the important allusions;

(*b*) The plan of the work, *i. e.*, its structure and method;
(*c*) The place of the work in literary history, the circumstances of its production, and the life of its author;
(*d*) That all details be studied, not as ends in themselves, but as means to a comprehension of the whole.

The real accomplishment of the Conference was the securing of outward uniformity. As to the substance of the requirement, it did little more than to combine the method for which Harvard had long stood, — an examination in composition, — with the new method which Yale favoured, — an examination on literature. Objections of many kinds have been brought up against the new requirements. The strongest and most pertinent are the following: —

Objections to the Requirements.

(1) As the Conference was from the circumstances of its origin rather Eastern than national, its natural tendency was to base its requirements on the practice of the large Eastern colleges, which do not attempt to supervise or inspect the work of their candidates throughout the whole secondary course, but prefer to know nothing about them except what is revealed by written examinations, set by the college itself, usually at the end of the candidate's course of preparation. The requirements were, therefore, such as pertained not specifically to all the secondary course in English, but only to that comparatively small part of it that could readily be used as a basis for a brief preliminary or final examination. The large majority of American colleges, who virtually hold no entrance examinations, and who aim to control to a greater or less extent the whole course in English pursued by their candidates, could raise the just objection that too little attention had been paid to their special needs.

(2) A second objection concerns the fact that only a few books are prescribed for reading and study, and these rigidly, without possibility of substitution. Here, again, it was the examination policy that guided the Conference. It would be obviously impracticable or inconvenient to examine candidates on books from a larger list, within the time conventionally given

to such tests, or to allow a wide option. Following its premises, therefore, the Conference chose a certain number of definite books, on which the candidate must present himself for examination. It thereby went counter to the preferences of many schools, who would have wished to train students on *Coriolanus*, for example, rather than on *Macbeth*, and of many colleges who would have wished, for various reasons, to indicate other masterpieces as a basis for reading and study.

(3) A third objection, raised as soon as the uniform arguments were put into operation, was that, though outwardly the requirements were practically everywhere the same, the colleges, as a matter of fact, were inclined to interpret them differently, and to relapse into their former diversity of practice.[1]

The Policy Weighed.

These objections to the policy adopted by the Conference seem to us, on the whole, just. It would have been better for the cause of good instruction in English throughout the country, if the Conference, instead of formulating a set of requirements for use in one or two very short examinations, could have marked out an approved course in English, which, if necessary, could lead up to some such examination as the Conference had in mind. But it must be remembered that the Conference had no power to prescribe such a course of study; that it is highly doubtful whether any considerable number of colleges would have been willing to agree in recommending any such course of study; and, finally, that it is not quite possible to conceive of so large a body of men, with diverse views and training, as composed the Conference, themselves agreeing on any such course of study. The time was not yet ripe for an attempt of that sort, highly desirable though it is, and it is not likely to be ripe until there has been a much more general and continued discussion of fundamental questions, and until the results of many experiments now being made can be more clearly estimated.

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[1] See Dr. Richard Jones's interesting pamphlet, which, however, slightly exaggerates the diversity of practice.

It is to be hoped that the time may soon come when the same or a similar conference will see its way clear to formulate a course of English study for preparatory schools, which will be generally adopted throughout the country. In the mean time it is plain (1) that the spirit of the requirement already leads ambitious schools to establish carefully planned courses of this sort, which aim at covering more than the mere letter of the requirement; and (2) that the majority of colleges are already being brought, by various influences, into substantial uniformity in their interpretation of the requirement.

Practical Results.

The actual results achieved by the new requirements may, then, be said to be in the main satisfactory. There had been two prominent parties in higher English instruction: one laid much stress on composition as a means of training and was afraid to recommend that English literature — a subject which demanded such learning and cultivation on the part of the teacher — should be included in the preparatory curriculum; the other was inclined to believe that composition was a proper exercise only for more mature minds, and that literature was the natural and fitting subject for school training. The new requirements merged these two complementary ideals, and saved the schools the long conflict of opinion that might otherwise have ensued. The schools, too, were stimulated to new efforts. Some that had virtually paid no attention to English as a preparatory subject were willing, now that the requirements became definite and uniform, to give a considerable amount of time to English study. The colleges and the schools, almost for the first time, felt that they had united in securing a desirable reform. Last and most important, the definiteness and comparative permanency of the lists of prescribed books led many preparatory schools to draft a rough course in English. They had in mind nothing but the technical fulfilment of the requirements; they attempted nothing but the mere routine reading and study of the little list of prescribed books. Still they purposed to do this systematically. Such courses of study were pitifully meagre,

unphilosophic, un-educational, but they were the beginning of better things. To secure any regular *course* in English was a great triumph.

Having satisfied ourselves as to the origin and nature of the new entrance requirements in English, we may now pass to a brief consideration of their relation to the secondary course in English. The main points to be borne in mind seem to be these: —

Special Preparatory English.

(1) The preparatory work in English should form a course in itself, extending over four years, with a time allotment of at least three periods a week, and very similar to the system of English instruction described in this chapter. The mere reading and study of the prescribed books will form scarcely a half of this work. To restrict the course to the prescribed books and to direct preparation for the examination is a bad policy. It goes counter to the spirit of the requirements and to the best educational thought of modern times.

(2) It is generally agreed that instruction in English should be identical through the first three years of the secondary course, both for those who are going to college and for those who are not. The only practical objection is based on the fact that, if this be the case, it will be necessary, during the second and third years, to provide for separate instruction on the books prescribed for reading, or else to force students who are not going to college to follow the line of reading laid down in the college requirements. There could be no plainer illustration of the unfortunate policy necessarily adopted by the Conference. Still, it is to be said (*a*) that the treatment of the books prescribed for reading requires less time than is commonly supposed, when the class has already been well trained in several branches of English study; and (*b*) that the books prescribed are almost invariably such as may be used without difficulty as the basis of general instruction.

(3) The statement is also commonly made that in the fourth year also the course of English study should be identical for both kinds of pupils, but here there is room for a wide differ-

ence of opinion. My own judgment is that pupils closing their scholastic education with this year need a broader or more advanced course of study than those who will attend college. The latter will have abundant opportunities for more training in composition, and for the study of the language in its earlier forms and of the history of English literature; the former are almost invariably barred from such pursuits, except in so far as they follow them unaided. It seems to me only fair, therefore, that pupils who are not going to college should have as many opportunities as possible of the kinds mentioned.

Importance to the College Candidate of the "Study" Books.

As for the college candidate, he has during his last year many demands to satisfy in other fields, and can scarcely be expected to devote more time to his English studies than he has in the three years preceding. Furthermore, he has a special duty to perform in preparing himself, with great care, on the books prescribed for study. In the larger educational organism which he is about to enter there are two points in which he must be highly proficient if he wishes to attain success. The first is the power of expressing himself clearly; the second is the power of understanding accurately and thoroughly what he reads. The work of the first, second, and third years of the high school should have started the student on the right path in the first respect; if he has passed satisfactorily his preliminary entrance examination in composition (*i. e.*, on the books prescribed for reading) he may turn his chief attention to other matters, — without, however, allowing his newly found skill in composition to diminish. It is, therefore, to the acquiring of the power of accurate understanding that he must now address himself with assiduity and ambition, and it is precisely this training that the books prescribed for study are best adapted. These he must master, one by one, — their language, and, so far as possible, their content. One of the first tasks set him in college will be the reading of books for the sake of the information they contain, the inferences to be drawn from that information, or the æsthetic pleasure or mental training derived from following the play of imagination or the

logical process of thought. To perform this high function, one of the greatest to be performed by the human mind, he must have had a full and sound preparation. He must know how to grapple with a paragraph, a chapter, a whole book, and to make himself lord over it. No ability for skimming, for mere cursory reading, will avail. He must know accurately the meaning and the force of words, and how to find them out when he does not know them. He must be familiar with English syntax and versification. He must understand ordinary allusions, and, again, how to hunt them down when he is not familiar with them. He must be able to follow a line of thought; to catch the bearing of details on the whole, — to understand "what it is all about." Of course, all this is not learned in a year. His training in it began years ago; it will continue for years still. But this is the year which should focus the training that has gone before and fit him worthily to receive that which is to come. This process means hard, definite, and continued drill on the books prescribed for study. It will at times not be a pleasant task; it will shut the pupil off from more interesting and more superficial study with his classmates who are not going to college, but it will prove the very corner-stone of his college work in English, and perhaps of his college work in all subjects where he must handle books.

CHAPTER IV

THE COURSE OF STUDY

I. General Principles

In framing a course of study in English for the schools, we must consider what elements are most suitable and necessary, and in what order those elements are to be presented. A solution of the first problem has been attempted in Chapters II. and III. of this book; the other, though already answered in part, seems to need a fuller discussion. A good course of study in any subject must present the elements of the subject in a well-recognized and justifiable sequence. This sequence may be logical, as in science and mathematics; or it may be chronological, as in history; but in any case it must present the data to be learned in a series, the later terms of which shall either rest upon or include the earlier terms. It must proceed from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex, and, usually, from the concrete and particular to the abstract and general.

The interest in the study of English has brought forth, in the published reports of educational conferences, in the reports of school superintendents and of normal school principals, in the books on the teaching of English, and in the articles in educational periodicals, many interesting suggestions as to the order and arrangement of the materials to be studied. Among these published opinions may be found considerable variety in the materials chosen, their order in the course, and their relation to each other. The main diversity seems to lie in the arrangement of the material. Upon the fitness of certain works of literature for educational purposes,

and upon the necessity of acquiring certain things in expression, an empirical agreement fairly general has long been reached. When we come, however, to the arrangement of this material, we still find a considerable divergence; a divergence which seems to indicate a fundamental difference in theories of language instruction. The question at issue seems to be, Can the vernacular be taught in the elementary and secondary schools by a logical, or at least a highly systematized, arrangement of the course? A high school course in English built mainly upon this principle appears in the report of the Committee on College Entrance Requirements submitted to the National Educational Association in 1899. All the work in composition and literature is here arranged by years in conformity to the rhetorical divisions of literature into narration, description, and exposition. In the fourth year the study of life and character in novels and poetry and a survey of the history of English literature are offered. This arrangement at once appeals to us for its clearness and its suggestiveness. But a little reflection raises doubts. Narration and description have a trying habit of taking on mixed forms, and of assuming varying degrees of importance in the same piece of literature. Young students, moreover, are not interested so much in classifying literature as in knowing it and feeling it; they are not so ready to discuss the technical distinctions of the rhetorician as the relation of the literature to life. To me, the rhetorical basis of classification, especially when it recommends the treatment of the lyric mainly as a form of exposition, seems wrong. The course referred to above seems best precisely where it breaks away from its schematic rhetorical arrangement.

If, as has been suggested, we arrange the work according to types of literary form, we are again in difficulty. Some of the novels ought to be read in the first year of the high school, some (like *The Vicar of Wakefield*) not earlier than the third; some of the lyrics are good for the primary grades, some for the fourth year of the high school. *Julius Cæsar*

can be well read early in the high school course, *Macbeth* ought to be reserved for the last year, *Gareth* and *Lynette* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* can win an audience anywhere between twelve and eighteen years of age. If we attempt to fix the place of books in connection with other subjects to which they are somehow related, we only increase our perplexity. For the authors unhappily did not foresee their pedagogic importance, and often neglected to present their theme in a form within the comprehension of the appropriate grade. A chronological arrangement of the books would be still worse. It would fail in many points to bring in the works when they could be best appreciated, and they could not be so presented to young pupils as to lead them to see the historical evolution of our literature. But one other principle of arrangement remains to be considered; and that, fortunately, is the order now generally adopted, the order of ease and interest, — the line of least resistance. From the first primary grade to the end of the high school, the determining thing in choosing literature for the pupils should be its adaptability to their interests, their powers, and their needs. When this is attained, but not before, let other claims be heard.

It would be poor teaching of English, indeed, which made no reference to other subjects of knowledge, no attempt to classify types of literature and methods of treatment within the same type, or no effort to give a sense of the development of our literature and of its progressive reflection of the ideas and feelings of our race. All these things should come in, at the appropriate time, as a part of the work. But they are matters of instruction, not of the making of the course of study. They are not the province of the school board or of the superintendent; they are the teacher's own peculiar domain. They cannot be given in an orderly, systematic fashion. Order and system may, and indeed must, be attained. But it must be built up in the mind of the pupil by teachers in whom the habit of erecting a symmetrical struc-

ture out of loose and unclassified materials is a confirmed mental trait.

In the field of expression the same general principles hold good. The short, the simple, the concrete, the interesting, must come first. We must pass from the easy to the difficult by moderate stages and by frequent iterations. Certain things must, however, have an early place, not from their interest, but from their necessity. These are mainly the conventional and arbitrary matters of written language, which have the same relation to later work as do the first attempts at speech in the nursery.

II. The Elementary Schools

The general principles underlying the English work in the elementary school have been fully discussed in Chapter II., and need not be referred to here. In the choice of the literature for these grades it must be remembered that interest and comprehension run side by side to a much greater extent than in the high school. Interest, therefore, is of the first importance. For the most part, such interest can be held only by stories with a good deal of action and by descriptions at once lively and simple. Fables, fairy stories, stories of child life, myths, simple narrative and descriptive poems, and very easy longer works, like *Hiawatha*, are the appropriate material for the first two or three years. For the middle years of the course, myths, narratives in prose and poetry — especially of the heroic type — biography and the brighter essays on nature, like those of Burroughs, are the best. For the last two years the reading need not be different in character from the earlier literature read in the high school. The only difference will be in the treatment of it.

The following outline, taken from the Teachers College Record, Vol. I. No. 3 (May, 1900), expresses my views of the language work appropriate to the elementary school: —

LANGUAGE WORK ARRANGED IN ORDER OF SUBJECTS

I. SPELLING.

(I) Grades[1] 1 and 2. Imitative, incidental to the main object of learning to write simple sentences. Phonetics introduced to give the elements of orthography and pronunciation.

(II) Grades 3–4. Definite work in spelling as subject of special study.

Grade 3. Diacritical marks taught. Spelling-book used. Words learned in lists, classified according to form. Exceptions noted. Work both written and oral. Special attention to errors in the children's written work. Effort made to cultivate a conscientious accuracy in the children, but spelling kept subordinate to things of higher value.

Grade 4. Same plans continued. Definite lessons assigned. Use of spelling-book continued. Dictionary used by the children.

Grades 5–7. Same work continued in more advanced form.

(III) Grade 8. Children made to understand that correct spelling must come from their unaided efforts.

II. WRITING.

(I) Begun in Grade 1. Imitative; free, large movements taught; ideo-motor activities aroused. Words and simple sentences copied.

(II) Grades 2–7. Definite instruction in writing. Aim, — to cultivate (1) freedom, (2) accuracy, (3) speed. Work culminates in Grades 5–7.

III. ARBITRARY SIGNS AND FORMS.

(I) Capitals.

1. Grades 1–3. Beginning of sentences, pronoun I, proper names; names of persons, days of week, months, streets; lines of poetry, direct quotations, etc.
2. Grade 4. Review of previous work; other usages not previously given.

(II) Punctuation.

1. Grade 1. Period and question-mark at the end of a sentence.
2. Grade 2. Period after abbreviation; apostrophe in contractions and in possessive; comma after yes and no, and with names of persons addressed.

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[1] Here and elsewhere in this book the grades of the elementary school are numbered from the first year in school. Thus, grade 3 would mean the third year in school, and would designate children about nine years of age.

3. Grade 3. Quotation marks in undivided quotations; conventional usages in letter-writing; apostrophe in possessive.
4. Grade 4. Exclamation marks; hyphen; apostrophe in plural possessives; marks in divided quotations.
5. Grade 5. Review of work of Grades 3 and 4.
6. Grades 6–8. Work of preceding years, with special reference to the *logic* of punctuation, and its importance in establishing unity and coherence. In Grades 7 and 8 a definite scheme of rules for punctuation may be placed in the children's hands, and turned to critical use by giving them examples to punctuate.

(III) Letter-writing.

1. Grades 2–5. Exercises in the *forms* of correspondence, and in familiar letter-writing.
2. Grades 6 and 7. Business letters; formal and informal correspondence.

(IV) Abbreviations.

1. Grade 2. Mr., Mrs., Rev., Dr., St., Ave., names of states, names of months, etc.
2. Grade 3. Roman numerals; familiar titles, as Capt., Col., Gen., D.D., etc. Common contractions.
3. Grades 4–8. Common abbreviations needed by the general reader, as the opportunity arises in the work of the school; e. g., A.B., A.M., Anon., ibid., A.D., B.C., i. e., etc.

(V) Arrangement of titles of books or chapters, indention of paragraphs, etc., Grades 2–4.

IV. Word Study.

(I) Form.

1. Grades 1–4. Recognition of known words in print and in script. Writing and pronunciation of such words.
   Grades 2–4. Diacritical marks. Spelling. Frequent practice in writing words to gain facility.
2. Grades 3–8. Use of dictionary and spelling-book. (See also under I. (II).) Special attention to prefixes and suffixes, and analysis of familiar compounds.

(II) Meanings.

1. Grades 1 and 2. Given by teacher.
2. Grades 3–8. Use of dictionaries. See above, (I), 2.
3. Grades 2–4. Extension of vocabulary, by literature, school studies and conversation, by "memory gems," and by reproductions, written and oral.
4. Grades 4–8. Synonyms, homonyms, etymology (given as subsidiary), study of things well said in simple litera-

ture. Literature and school studies treated partly as a means of extending the vocabulary with the increase in range and accuracy of concepts. Memory work in good literature.

5. Grades 3–8. Special attention given to *idiomatic* forms of expression.

V. Organization of Material.

(I) Whole composition.

1. Grades 4–8. Topical outlines.
2. Grades 6–8. Simpler laws of description and narration.
3. Grades 7 and 8. Instruction in gathering and arranging material.

(II) Paragraphs.

1. Grade 3. Mechanical form and simplest division taught.
2. Grades 4 and 5. Elementary principles of paragraphing taught from literature and applied in written work.
3. Grades 6–8. Principles of narrative and descriptive paragraphs taught as above, with some slight reference to the order of development *within* the paragraph.
4. Grades 7 and 8. The paragraph treated as a basis of composition. Elementary work in simple development of expository writing as in history or science lessons. Expansion of sentence into paragraph; condensation of paragraph into sentence.
5. Grades 4–8. Pupils trained to sustained attention and memory, for power of dealing with progressively larger units of material. Topical recitations.

(III) Sentences.

1. Grades 1–3. Good sentence form taught mainly by imitation and empirically.
2. Grades 4–8. Attention to form of sentence for euphony and clearness, in the literature read, and in the writing of the pupils.
3. Grades 5–7. Special work in transformation of sentence elements.
4. Grades 6–8. Study of sentence-structure as determined by the needs of emphasis, unity, and logical relation; enforced in Grades 7 and 8 by correction of wrong or ineffective sentences.
5. Grades 4–8. Attention to common errors in expression.

VI. Subject-matter.

1. Grade 1. Reproduction of simple sentences and stories, mainly oral.

2. Grades 2 and 3. Reproduction of stories, picture stories, "filling-in" exercises, letter-writing. "Memory gems," school lessons.
3. Grades 4 and 5. Reproduction of reading and other lessons; descriptions of pictures, objects, and familiar scenes.
4. Grades 4–8. Reproductions; descriptions; written accounts of things seen at first hand. Letter-writing.
5. Grades 1–6. Practice in dictation.

VII. GRAMMAR.

1. Grades 2–4. Possessives. Empirically, the relation between verb and subject, and the objective pronoun forms.
2. Grades 5 and 6. Nouns, verbs, and simpler modifying relations; subsidiary to the interpretation of the reading and to the composition work.
3. Grades 7 and 8. Systematic study of grammar, with text-book. Grammar viewed throughout as a study of forms, and of relations of thought. Function made the basis of classification.

VIII. CRITICISM OF WRITTEN WORK.

1. Grades 1–3, direct help from the teacher, aiming to give the pupil the desire to do things well. Criticism mainly constructive. In Grade 3, simple symbols used to indicate the pupil's most common errors.
2. Grades 4–8. Definite efforts to make the pupil self-critical. Symbols of correction used, increasing in number from Grade 4 to Grade 8, demanding of the pupil that he discover and rectify his mistakes wherever this can be enforced without discouraging him. Attention given to the gathering and organization of material.

III. THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The discussion of the high school work in Chapter III. has included full details as to the order and kinds of instruction in language. Some further word as to the arrangement of the work in literature seems desirable.

It is obvious that a good school can, by giving three lessons per week for four years to the subject of English, cover all the necessary work in expression and include much more

reading than is required in the college entrance list.[1] It was, indeed, expected by the Conference which framed the list that it should only be representative, and that, while these books should remain as the basis of the college entrance examinations, other books appropriately selected should supplement and round out the course. The following order is based mainly upon what I conceive to be the capacities and tastes of typical high school classes: —

First Year. *Ivanhoe*, and two or three of the following of Scott's novels: *Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, *Anne of Geierstein*, *Old Mortality*; *Silas Marner*, *The House of the Seven Gables*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, selections from Irving, *The Lady of the Lake*. The interest would here be mainly in plot and character, and in the attitudes towards life of romantic and realistic fiction. It is especially desirable in the first year that the number of types presented be few, and fully exemplified.

Second Year. *The Vision of Sir Launfal* and other selections from Lowell, selections from Bryant and Emerson, and an outline history of American Literature. *The De Coverley Papers*, and selected papers from *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* (with especial reference to their historical interest), *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *The Idylls of the King*.

Third Year. *Julius Cæsar*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, with reference to the plot, the character, the essential idea, and the differences between tragedy and comedy. Irving's *Life of Goldsmith* and *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Carlyle's *Essay on Burns* and selected poems from Burns, Macaulay's *Life of Johnson* and *Essay on Addison*.

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[1] The list, as discussed in Chapter III., is that which is at present in force. At the last meeting of the Conference (1902) certain changes were made. Irving's *Life of Goldsmith* was substituted for *The Vicar of Wakefield*, and Macaulay's *Life of Johnson* for Macaulay's *Essay on Milton*, and three of *The Idylls of the King* (*Launcelot and Elaine*, *The Passing of Arthur*, and *Gareth and Lynette*) for *The Princess*. *The Lady of the Lake* was added to the reading list, and *Macbeth* and *Julius Cæsar* were interchanged in their positions on the lists for reading and study respectively.

Fourth Year. Burke's *Speech on Conciliation*, Milton's *Minor Poems* and Books I.–IV. of *Paradise Lost*, Macaulay's *Essay on Milton*, Tennyson's *The Princess*, *Macbeth*, selected poems from Wordsworth, Keats, or Browning, the Prologue to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. An outline history of English literature.

II

The Teacher and his Training

CHAPTER V

THE TRAINING OF THE TEACHER

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D. Salmon. The Art of Teaching. Longmans. 1899.

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II. On the special training of the teacher of rhetoric and composition, see

J. F. Genung. The Teacher's Outfit in Rhetoric. SCHOOL REVIEW, III. 405.

S. Thurber. The following articles: Suggestions of English Study for Teachers of English, THE [Syracuse] ACADEMY, V. 513; Milder Suggestions of English Study for Secondary Teachers, THE [Syracuse] ACADEMY, VI. 167; Admonitions as to the Primary Teaching of English, Boston, 1894; The Conditions needed for the successful Teaching of English Composition, SCHOOL REVIEW, II. 13; Five Axioms of Composition Teaching, SCHOOL REVIEW, V. 7.

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III. On special training for the teaching of grammar, see

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SUCCESS in teaching English, as in teaching any other subject in the curriculum, depends primarily not upon training, but upon the possession of a special talent. The teacher who has not a passion and an aptitude for imparting instruction in English, who does not feel that it is the great thing in life to live

for, and a thing, if necessary, to die for, who does not realize at every moment of his classroom work that he is performing the special function for which he was foreordained from the foundation of the world, — such a teacher cannot profit greatly by any course of training, however ingeniously devised or however thoroughly applied. He lacks the one thing needful. On the other hand, a special talent for teaching English is not in itself a guarantee of success. Unaided, it will soon reach its limit. It cannot attain to its highest efficiency without submitting itself to a severe and protracted discipline.

Special Talent Necessary.

The purpose of special training is frequently misunderstood. It is thought to be for the sake of giving the teacher expertness in his subject and a knowledge of methods of teaching. In a sense both of these aims are right. But they are subordinate. The main purpose is to give the teacher, not knowledge of his subject, but self-knowledge ; not knowledge of methods of teaching, but resources to meet the exigencies of the classroom. Thus the effect of a proper course of training will be in the first place to reveal to the teacher his own powers and limitations. He will learn by it how much he really knows and how much he has yet to learn. The peculiar defects and peculiar virtues of his special aptitude will be brought home to him. He will be put in a position to make the most of himself. But a further result of training will be to make him more resourceful. Knowing the fundamental principles of his subject, he will be able to give it greater depth and substance, and thus to make it a better nutriment for growing minds. Drawing his illustrative matter from a wider range, it will be easier for him than for the untrained teacher to make it various and interesting. The trained teacher will also be better able than the untrained to take advantage quickly of new theories about the teaching of English. He will not need to be told by others, as does the untrained teacher, whether the novel ideas attractively set out before him are educational forces or educational fads. If his

What Training can do.

training has been what it should be, he will know of his own knowledge.

To come now to details, it is obvious that certain general requirements will be laid upon all who teach English; certain other requirements will concern more especially those who teach particular branches of English, as composition, grammar, and literature. In what follows these two aspects of the teacher's equipment will be considered separately.

I. General Qualifications

(1) Among the general requisites may be mentioned, first, ability to speak and write the English language with clearness, accuracy, and freedom from bookishness. This qualification is of fundamental importance, and should be insisted upon; but it must not be misinterpreted. It cannot be held necessary, for example, that the teacher should, on the one hand, illustrate in his own writing and speaking the "graces of diction," so called, or, on the other, that he should express himself in a severe and academic manner.[1] There is no style peculiarly appropriate to a teacher of English, nor one from which he may be required to abstain, unless it is a bad style. It is even possible — and the fact has been established by numerous examples — for a teacher whose mode of composition is singularly defective to train up, by force of enthusiasm and sympathy, coupled with ardent admiration of good style in others, writers of the first rank. Nevertheless, it is highly desirable that all teachers of English should be able to express themselves naturally and logically and with taste.

Ability to use Good English.

Although the foundation for such an equipment must be laid early in life, in the grammar school and the high school, yet

[1] "How often has it been my experience to have spoken to a pedagogic audience on some topic that I deemed important, and to find, when the question was opened for discussion, that I had before me the task of defending my pronunciation or my syntax instead of my thesis." Dr. Samuel Thurber, in the School Review, I. 651.

every teacher of English, even of mature years, may do something to improve himself in this regard. He can seize every opportunity for practice in writing; he can watch his conversation; he can prepare himself carefully for his daily talks to his students. A teacher who has the ambition and the will power to put himself through such a course of discipline, can in a few months bring about a marked improvement in his use of English.[1]

Self-Cultivation in English.

One obstacle which lies in the way of most teachers, but especially of teachers who have been trained in certain of the normal schools, is the tradition of a stiff, frigid, and yet inaccurate style of speech and writing sometimes denominated "schoolmaster's English." The power of this speech-tradition to corrupt the mental faculties is as striking as it is natural. Walking through the halls of a school where such speech is traditional, one may see the evidences of it in the faces of the students. Sitting in the classroom, one may fairly hear the mental machinery creak. Singularly enough, the mastery of this iron-jointed dialect, or rather the being mastered by it, is not incompatible with violations of taste; so that one who examines the writings of teachers who are addicted to it will frequently find, scattered through the arid waste, hideous artificial flowers of rhetoric, anecdotes of questionable propriety, and sometimes humour approximating to horse-play. The teacher of English who has been so unfortunate as to acquire this scholastic jargon and its vicious concomitants should take pains to rid himself of it by every means in his power. First, he should endeavour to cultivate his taste by the extensive reading of simple, unforced prose, — the writings of John Burroughs, Philip Gilbert Hamerton, W. H. Hudson (*Idle Days in Patagonia* and *The Naturalist in La Plata*) will be of some help for this purpose. In the next place, he should make an effort to displace the characteristic vocabulary of the jargon. Favourite words and phrases should be noted down, and hackneyed

Schoolmaster's English.

[1] See Palmer's *Self-Cultivation in English*.

terms, when they are discovered, laid upon the shelf. By the exercise of a little labour and some vigilance, the teacher may in a comparatively short time rid himself of this disease of speech.

(2) In the second place, it is important that the teacher of English should be well read in English literature and English literary history.[1] That he should have expert knowledge of the whole range of literature in English is of course out of the question; but he ought at least on the one hand to have made a careful survey of the entire field and to have acquired definite ideas of the course of literary development, and on the other hand to have formed an intimate acquaintance with the leading English classics. As regards the history of literature, the greatest danger is perhaps that the teacher will rest content with biography and history instead of pursuing the study of literature itself. Literature has its own peculiar record, which in a sense is distinct from the lives of the men who wrote it or from the times in which it appeared, closely as it is related to both. Not to grasp the essential facts and laws of literary evolution is to lack a most important clue to the proper study of literature. Again, as regards literary masterpieces, the greatest danger is that the teacher will mistake vague recollections of the utterances of critics, more or less eminent, for acquaintance with the works themselves. What is needed in this particular of his training is, first, appreciative reading, which through sympathy will bring the reader into the closest possible contact with the mind of the writer, and then critical reading, which through the exercise of the judgment will reveal the technical sources of the writer's power.[2] Neither kind can be dispensed with. The first is needed in order that the appreciation of literature may be genuine and vital, not merely formal; and the second in order that the appreciation aroused

Knowledge of English Literature.

[1] The word "English" will be used here and hereafter in the sense of English and American.

[2] See "Two Problems of Composition Teaching," by J. V. Denney, *Contributions to Rhetorical Theory*, No. 4.

by the first kind of reading may not degenerate into sentimentality.

Extent of the Teacher's Reading.

How extensive ought this reading to be? How much prose, how much poetry should a candidate for a position as teacher of English be able to call his own intimate possession? This is a difficult question, and any answer to it, however carefully guarded, is liable to misconstruction. Nevertheless an answer will be risked. As a convenient measure of literature in bulk, we may take Professor Winchester's *Five Short Courses of Reading*.[1] Let the candidate examine Professor Winchester's lists of masterpieces; if he finds that he has familiar personal acquaintance with not more than two-thirds of the works there cited, he may conclude that as concerns the particular under consideration he is poorly equipped for a position as teacher of English in a secondary school. He should hasten to read the other third. Let him not infer, however, that when he has read the remaining third his equipment will be complete. Of the reading of English masterpieces there is literally no end.

Courses of Reading.

A word of advice may be given at this point in regard to courses of reading. Such courses are often fruitless because they are undertaken for no definite purpose. Nothing is more futile than to plod wearily through great tracts of prose and poetry — Wordsworth's *Excursion* will serve as an example in both kinds — just for the sake of being able to say that they have been traversed. On the other hand, a definite purpose on the reader's part will in time give interest and even charm to any worthy piece of literature, no matter how distasteful it may have been at the start. Such a purpose may always be provided by this simple device: Let the reader ask himself a question that can be answered only by a perusal of the work. For example, suppose the case of a teacher who has never read any of Thackeray's novels. He —

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[1] C. T. Winchester, *Five Short Courses of Reading in English Literature with Biographical and Critical References*. Ginn. 1892.

or more likely she — has not found in them, we may suppose, so far as he has gone, anything likable. Now such a teacher, instead of being asked to read Thackeray as a matter of conscience, should be referred to the following passage in Brownell's *Victorian Prose Masters* (pp. 26–27) : —

"Nothing better attests George Eliot's scientific interest in character than her constant exhibition of its evolution. This is one of her real contributions to literature. The effect of circumstances in developing a character like Lydgate, for example, the difference between Rosamond as she is first introduced and when she leaves the stage, are almost Spencerian demonstrations. This, as Mr. Albert Dicey, I think, has observed, was an unknown thing in fiction when George Eliot began to write, and it is naturally savoured by the palate of our day, which seeks a taste of science even in its literary confections. But it is needless to point out that it implies an instinct quite lacking in Thackeray, in whose view character is spectacle, significant spectacle, to be sure, and its significance often copiously insisted upon, but essentially spectacle, and not the illustrative incarnation of interesting traits and tendencies. This is also Shakespeare's view, it may be added, as it is clearly the distinctly literary view as opposed to the scientific."

The teacher of English unfamiliar with Thackeray, who, after reading this extract, will not at once (if there is opportunity) sit down to an eager perusal of *Vanity Fair* or *Pendennis*, in order to verify the criticism, has seriously mistaken his vocation.

The question started for this purpose need not be abstruse ; indeed, the simpler it is the better ; but having raised it, the teacher should pursue it relentlessly through the work in hand. If after the chase is begun and the reader is in full cry, the work itself should become so interesting that it is read for its own sake, just for the enjoyment of it, doubtless no great harm will be done.[1]

[1] This is not the place to do more than to illustrate this method of self-propulsion, so to speak, into an acquaintance with English classics. Any good critical essay will suggest unsolved literary problems which can be used in the way suggested above.

(3) Granted a mastery of the mother-tongue and a fair acquaintance with English literature, it remains to be said that no teacher has an adequate preparation for teaching English, even in the elementary grades, who has not been thoroughly grounded in at least one foreign language, ancient or modern. It is a commonplace of education that the mother-tongue can be understood and appreciated only by those who have made some progress in an alien tongue; and if the knowledge of one foreign tongue is good for the teacher, a knowledge of two is still better. What this language, or these languages, shall be in any individual case is a question which must be left to be decided by the teacher's opportunities; but if there is room for choice and but two languages can be studied, doubtless the most advantageous combination is Latin and German.

Foreign Languages.

A knowledge of Old English is also desirable, though it can be more easily dispensed with, or compounded for, than a knowledge of the classics or of the modern languages. Important on many grounds as Old English is, the contention that it can rival Greek, Latin, French, or German as a quickening force, as a means of culture, is quite idle. If the teacher in his preparatory work must choose between Latin and Old English, or German and Old English, he should not hesitate long. But granting that the other languages have been studied, the claims of Old English are considerable. Only through the systematic study of the older forms is it possible to gain a just idea of the genius of the language as a whole. A knowledge of the older forms is also essential to an understanding of the development of the language and of its present condition. A teacher, then, who has traced the stream of English speech from its fountain head downward, has a distinct advantage over one who is familiar only with its modern aspects.

Old English.

Old English, however, is far from being a difficult study, especially to one who has some knowledge of German. An hour a day for a school year spent upon some such text-book

as Professor A. S. Cook's *First Book in Old English*, will give the teacher an acquaintance with the grammar and an induction into the literature; and if this brief study be judiciously supplemented by a summer's term at a college or university under some one who has expert knowledge, the subject may be fairly mastered, for all practical purposes, in a twelvemonth. The teacher of English, therefore, to whom the Anglo-Saxon grammar and literature long remain a sealed book, is wholly without excuse for his ignorance.

Self-Cultivation in Old English.

II. Special Qualifications

The preceding qualifications are general in character, and such as may be required of all teachers of English. It is now desirable to consider briefly the special preparation demanded for the teaching of specific phases of English, as rhetoric and composition, grammar, and literature.

(1) The essentials in the equipment of a teacher of composition are partly matters of skill, partly matters of knowledge. Among those belonging to the first class the most important, or at any rate the least dispensable, is skill in reading and correcting themes. Intrinsically, skill in this particular is not perhaps to be rated very high. It may be no more than a knack. One may conceivably be able to read themes rapidly and correct them accurately, and yet be good for very little else. Still, so much of the teacher's happiness and success depends upon this knack that it must be set down as a *sine qua non*. The born teacher of composition reads themes rapidly and interestedly, and with the exhilaration which comes from the successful performance of a function for which one is specially adapted. If then, after a fair trial under favourable circumstances, the teacher finds the reading of themes slow, irksome, and depressing, he may fairly conclude that he is not a born teacher of composition. He is out of his element and he cannot by any possibility be entirely successful in this

Composition: Theme-Correcting.

field unless he can employ some one else to do the correcting for him or haply can devise some method, as yet unguessed, by which essay-correcting may be done away with.[1] Although ability to do this kind of work well and easily is a natural aptitude, it is, like any other gift, susceptible of great improvement. If it is present in some degree, but undeveloped, a systematic effort should be made to cultivate it.[2]

Advanced Study of Rhetoric.

(2) As a second qualification of the teacher of composition, may be named scholarship in the history and theory of rhetoric. Such training has often been decried on the ground that the teacher who has made a profound study of rhetorical theory will be disposed to unload his erudition on the class. It is doubtful whether experience will bear this out, but even if it should, ignorance of one's subject is no proper safeguard in the classroom. It is the business of the specialist to be as wise as he can in his own line of work.[3] Furthermore, the teacher who has made an exhaustive study of rhetorical principles has a real advantage in the

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[1] For a discussion of possible substitutes, see the report of the investigation by the Pedagogical Section of the Modern Language Association, in the SCHOOL REVIEW for May, 1902, "The Undergraduate Study of Composition." The following anecdote quoted (from memory) from Andrew Clark's *Stories of Lincoln College* illustrates a method, if not of doing away with theme-correcting, at least of reducing it to its lowest terms. The scene was Mark Pattison's room at Oxford. Pattison was standing with his back to the grate smoking, when a knock came at the door and to him there entered an undergraduate with a composition in his hand. Pattison took the paper, quickly ran his eye over it, then crumpled it up in his hand and threw it in the face of the student, who immediately left the room. Not a word was spoken on either side.

[2] For this purpose perhaps no exercise is better than impromptu oral correction before a class. The following method is suggested. The themes are placed by the students in a basket on the teacher's desk just before the beginning of the recitation. The teacher has no opportunity of examining the papers in advance. At the opening of the hour he gathers up a handful of them, and reading them aloud makes corrections as he goes. The unskilled teacher will find that the successful performance of the task will try his powers, particularly his powers of concentration and discrimination, to the utmost.

[3] For a contrary view, see the remarks of Dr. Samuel Thurber at the

classroom over one who has not done so. Not only is he delivered from the tyranny of the text-book, but if his study has been of the right kind he knows ways of enriching and enlivening the subject which are denied to the teacher untrained in this respect. Above all, a thorough-going study of rhetoric absolves the teacher from the finicalness and intolerance, characteristic indeed of the sciolist in any line of thought, but peculiarly characteristic of the sciolist in rhetoric.

Grammar.

(3) From composition we may pass to grammar. It is a common saying that grammar is the worst-taught subject in the English curriculum. If the saying be true, the reason for the condition of things it represents is not far to seek, for few teachers have made special preparation for teaching English grammar. Such preparation, in addition to a familiar acquaintance with the best school text-books, should include (1) a study of the development of the English language from the earliest times to the present; (2) a study of the general principles of comparative philology, or the science of language; (3) a study of the psychology of speech. Though all of these subjects are abstruse, they have fortunately fallen of late into the hands of persons who have treated them with the utmost simplicity. In their main principles they are now accessible to every teacher.[1] Of the three subjects specified, the first is doubtless the most indispensable, for a teacher who is ignorant of the history of his mother-tongue is disqualified for the teaching of its grammar; but an acquaintance with linguistics and with psychology, even though it be but a limited acquaintance, will be found of great advantage. The comparative study of language will free the student from a superstitious reverence for grammatical rules, and give him an insight into the true nature

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eighth annual meeting of the New England Association of Colleges and Preparatory Schools, published in the SCHOOL REVIEW, I. 650–655.

[1] See the Bibliography at the beginning of this chapter. The most elementary books under each of these three heads are perhaps (1) Emerson's *History of the English Language;* (2) Sweet's *History of Language;* (3) Titchener's *Primer of Psychology.*

of usage and idiom. From a study of the psychology of speech he will learn through what processes the child acquires his native tongue, and how the various elements of the language present themselves to the child-mind at different stages of its development. The total outcome of this study should be to give the teacher a new conception of the meaning of English grammar and its place in the curriculum. He should cease to regard it as a study merely of abstract rules and formulas; he should come to see that the underlying subject is virtually the same as that which underlies composition and literature, namely, the expressive and communicative activities of the English-speaking race. And he should come to see that in teaching grammar his chief duty is to awaken the minds of his students to the meaning of their own familiar modes of expression. This knowledge, of itself, if it could be brought home to the consciousness of the teacher, would effect a revolution in the teaching of English grammar.

(4) Of preparation for the teaching of literature the most important requisites — acquaintance with the English classics and with literary history — have been specified in the general requirements for all teachers of English. **Literature.** A teacher whose special subject is literature should naturally go farther in the same direction. He should know his classics more intimately, and he should have a more thorough acquaintance with the facts of literary history. Experience has shown that the best method of securing this profounder knowledge of literature is to make a prolonged and exhaustive study of a single period, a single author, or a single problem.

(5) Besides knowing the masterpieces and literary history, it is the duty of every teacher of English literature to form some acquaintance with the underlying principles of literary criticism. Inasmuch as these are dependent, in the modern formulation of them, upon æsthetics and psychology, some knowledge of these latter subjects is also to be desired. How far such studies should be pursued is an open question, but certainly the teacher of literature who can to **Principles of Literary Criticism.**

some extent derive his principles of criticism and his standards of appreciation independently, has a distinct advantage over the teacher who is compelled to take his principles as he finds them from the pages of a text-book. The teacher psychologically and æsthetically equipped is less likely to be bewildered by the contradictory opinions of belligerent critics, or to be overawed by the solemn platitudes of self-constituted authorities. Knowing the sources from which critical principles are derived, he is able to reconcile the seeming inconsistencies of rival theories or to explode their fallacies. He is also less likely to be tainted with the shallow sentimentalism which in some schools takes the place of intelligent appreciation.

The Study of Comparative Literature.

(6) A phase of literary criticism which has received much attention of late and is certain to receive more, is the study known as comparative literature. For a thorough comprehension of literary history, this study is doubtless as important as is the study of comparative philology for the understanding of grammar. Although the subject has not as yet gained a foothold in many universities and although its principles are but ill defined, the ambitious teacher of literature will do well to follow with some care the progress of this branch of his chosen subject.[1]

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[1] For the chief authorities on Comparative Literature, see Gayley and Scott's *Introduction to the Methods and Materials of Literary Criticism*, Ginn, 1899, pp. 248–278.

CHAPTER VI

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ASSIGNMENT

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The subject of this chapter has not hitherto received special attention. For a discussion of the principles of method in general, see such works as

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Meaning of the Term Assignment.

In newspaper offices the term "assignment" is used to denote the managing editor's allotment of a particular task of reporting to a particular member of the staff. The instructions are usually written in a book called the "assignment book." This word "assignment" it is proposed to borrow from newspaper usage and employ in a somewhat broader sense. It will here be used for certain classroom procedures the general object of which is to induce in the student a state of mind favourable to composition. Employed in this sense, the term includes the following steps: (1) the announcement of the subject; (2) stimulation of interest in the subject; (3) arousal of a desire to write upon it; (4) suggestion of a method of procedure in writing; (5) precautions against wasted effort. Each of these points will be considered in turn.

(1) The first topic suggests the interesting question whether it is better for the student to select his own subject or for the teacher to select a subject for him. Advantages may be urged on both sides. On the one hand, it may be said, first, that to choose a proper subject for an essay is a valuable mental exercise. It not only trains the student's judgment; it increases his knowledge by compelling him to search his mental stores and take stock of his available resources. Secondly, the exercise is of practical value to the student because it is a task which he will be compelled to perform often in later years. In the school of life there will be no teacher at his side to choose his subject for him. On the other hand, it is clear, first, that much of the mental effort expended in choosing is of no practical value, because it is misdirected and desultory. The student in search of a subject ought theoretically to use his judgment, but practically he does no such thing. Instead of ransacking his mental stores and making comparison of competing subjects, he casts his eye lazily and unobservantly over the field of things in general. Delaying his choice until the eleventh hour, he chooses at last in a panic and quite at random. Such a procedure as this is relaxing rather than strengthening. Secondly, to meet the argument that training in choice of a subject is useful in later life, the reply may be made that in the actual struggle for existence choice among unlimited possibilities is extremely rare. It may even be said that choice of any kind is the exception rather than the rule. Men who make a business of writing do not spend much time or energy in choosing subjects; subjects are chosen for them. Reporters on newspapers, for example, are told explicitly what they shall write; it is seldom that they have an opportunity to select their subjects. Reviewers write upon the books that are sent to them for review. Novelists and essayists, although they are popularly supposed to have great liberty, are as a matter of fact pursued relentlessly by ideas which cry for utterance and will not let them rest. The true man of letters never has occasion to say, "What in the world shall I write upon next?" His sentiment is

Selection of a Subject.

more likely to be, "How shall I find time for all the things that I *must* write about?" It is the same with lawyers, doctors, and other professional men; when they write as professional men, they have little opportunity for choice. The character of their work determines within narrow limits the subjects of their compositions. The only exception to this rule is the person who is taken unawares; the man, for example, who is called upon unexpectedly to "say something" at a banquet or to write an original sentiment in a young lady's album. In such an emergency (fortunately rare in the experience of most) the power of choosing rapidly an appropriate subject is doubtless an advantage. Setting this exceptional case aside, certain positive advantages accrue from the teacher's taking the selection of the subject into his own hands. First, he can in this way consult the genuine needs of his students instead of humouring their whims. Second, he can devise a progressive series of topics, covering a definite range of subject-matter. And finally, it is in his power to secure the advantage which comes from having the entire class write upon the same subject. From these considerations the conclusion may be drawn that in the majority of cases it is better for the teacher to choose the subject for the student than for the student to choose the subject for himself. If choice is given, it should be limited. The student may be allowed to choose one of two alternative subjects, or one of three or four aspects of the same subject.

A Special Exercise in Subject-Choosing.

Not to neglect, however, the benefit which undoubtedly comes from training of the selective power, the teacher should now and then give a special exercise in choosing a subject. This exercise should be carefully prepared for, and should take the form of a discussion. The teacher should lead the class to imagine a definite situation or emergency where the choice of a subject is necessary and urgent. He should then ask not only, "What subject should you choose in such an emergency?" but "How would you go about the choice of it?" "Why would you choose such and such a subject rather than another?" In other words, the teacher should

try to draw out from the class and impress upon them the fundamental principles of subject-choosing. Adroitly managed, such an exercise might be of considerable value.

If the teacher is, then, to choose the subject for the student, it is desirable to consider next the principles upon which his choice shall be made. These may be briefly stated as follows: (1) The subject chosen must be one that is interesting to the teacher. (2) The subject chosen must be one that is interesting, or that can be made interesting, to the students.

Principles of Choice.

Teachers of English sometimes think that the first principle can be neglected. They allow tradition to impose upon them subjects for which they care little or nothing. This is a serious mistake, and is a potent cause of indifferent composition teaching. It must be borne in mind that after the essays are written they must be read, and it is the teacher who will read them. He ought to read with intense interest and a kindling enthusiasm. But if the subjects are distasteful to him, his reading, despite the most conscientious efforts, will be half-hearted and ineffectual. It is, then, of the utmost importance for the teacher to understand that in his selection he is — theoretically at least — as free as air. The world is before him, where to choose. There is no corner of the field of literature, science, art, philosophy, or humanity which is not his to cultivate if he desires. Subject to a single limitation — the second principle — he may as legitimately draw the subjects for the composition work from the mediæval romances as from current politics, from the Homeridæ or the Dutch school of painting as from the germ theory or the South African war.

Freedom of the Teacher.

In the second place, the subject should be actually or potentially interesting to the students and adapted to their powers. This is not so serious a limitation upon the teacher's choice as some teachers are disposed to think. A study of children's minds will show that the phases of thought or human activity are few indeed in which they have not some rudimentary concern, some germ of interest capable

Adaptation of Subject to Student.

of development. The difficulty has been that teachers of composition have conceived of subjects quite abstractly, as things which clamour to be written upon quite apart from the needs and personality of the individuals who are to write upon them. Substitute for the term "subjects" the word "interests," and the question takes on a different aspect. Subjects, in the abstract sense, may not be easy to find, but student interests are always present in abundance.

To call upon students to give expression to their interests does not necessarily mean, however, that the teacher is to follow passively the students' whims and fancies. It is the teacher's business to detect and encourage, not interests at large, but vital interests, — healthy interests. There are such things as unhealthy interests, and these it is his business to suppress.

Healthy Interests.

(2) Assuming that a subject has been found which is interesting to the teacher and potentially interesting to the members of the class, the next step is to make the potential interest actual, — if possible, to make the student feel that this subject is the most fascinating thing in the world. There are at least four ways of arousing such an interest. The first is by connecting the subject with other subjects already known to be interesting. In order that he may use this kind of stimulus intelligently, the wise teacher will make a special study of his pupils. He will learn their likes and dislikes and take stock of their ideas. Knowing these things, he will next seek for some point of contact between the new subject and the ideas already in their minds. Somehow he will find a place in the students' present scheme of interests for the new subject.

Arousal of Interest.

The second method of stimulating interest in a subject is to employ suspense and thereby to appeal to curiosity. The method is seen in its simplicity, and at the same time in its most effective form, in the common device of the interrupted narrative. The teacher develops the subject in story form up to a point of absorbing interest. Then he suddenly breaks off and leaves to the student the task of

Use of Suspense.

the conclusion. Similar effects may be secured in other
The teacher may give to a subject the interest of a puzzle
a paradox by discovering in it contradictory aspects which
eed to be reconciled, or by revealing phases of the subject which the student has not suspected, or by suggesting some novel method of treating it. An alert and enthusiastic teacher will delight in exercising his ingenuity to find new devices for creating suspense. By this means many old and hackneyed subjects may be given a new lease of life.

Turning abstractions into concrete images is a third method of creating interest. For this purpose the teacher should use illustrations, examples, allusions, and other similar devices for appealing to the imagination. Actual pictures will in many cases work wonders in making the dry bones live.

Appeal to the Imagination.

Fourthly and finally, a powerful stimulus may be supplied by the teacher's own sympathy and enthusiasm. The teacher's interest will kindle a like interest in the class; no student can resist it. It is essential, however, that the emotion should be genuine; interest pumped up for the occasion will leave the students cold. Another caution may be given at this point: the wise teacher will not say that a given subject is interesting, or tell the pupil that he ought to be interested in it. Still less will he upbraid the class, or any individual member of it, for lack of enthusiasm. Without mentioning the word "interest," the teacher will by his manner and his mode of speech make the class realize the attraction that the subject has for him, and arouse in them, through the influence of sympathy, a feeling similar to his own.

The Teacher's Sympathy.

(3) It is not sufficient, however, for the teacher merely to arouse interest in the subject; he should also arouse a desire to write upon it. Such a desire, when it is natural, springs from two healthy impulses: the impulse to give expression to one's thoughts and feelings, and the impulse to communicate one's thoughts and feelings to others. Both of these motive powers should be utilized to the

Arousal of the Desire to Write.

full. Being complementary, each may be stimulated by giving exercise to the other. Thus, in order to cultivate the impulse to expression, it is sufficient to reveal the need of communication. To cultivate the impulse to communication, it is sufficient to reveal the value of expression. If, for example, we wish to stir in any person a longing to express himself, we can do so most effectually by showing him that others are interested in what he will say. The sight of eager faces, the consciousness of waiting auditors, — these are the most powerful of all stimuli to expression. Conversely, the impulse to communication may be set going by making the writer or speaker realize the value to others of the information he is prepared to impart. To call out and utilize these two impulses, the student should be made to feel that he is a member of the little community embraced within the family and the school. What he has to say is of some value to the other members of this community. He has his part to play in furnishing them with information or amusement or criticism. This means that in assigning the work the teacher should be at some pains to provide an audience or a reader. Sometimes the audience will be real, sometimes it will be imaginary, but it should never be entirely lacking.

(4) It is appropriate and desirable, particularly in the earlier years, that the teacher should assist the student in blocking out his work. He may, if he chooses, suggest more or less definitely a method of analysis, an order of topics and a mode of beginning and concluding. He may even go farther. The appropriate length of the composition, the due proportion of the parts to the whole, the method of development, the adaptation of matter and manner to the needs of the readers, — all these things may be spoken of in the assignment, though the extent to which they are introduced and the emphasis to be thrown upon them are matters to be decided *ad hoc* in individual cases. In general it may be said that this part of the assignment should be rather of the nature of hints and suggestions than of positive injunctions. Here, at any rate, is no place for formal rules of rhetoric. If in this portion of the

Suggestion of Method.

assignment rhetorical principles are cited at all, they should be brought in by way of implication rather than by direct statement.[1]

(5) Finally, since prevention is better than cure, it is well to devote a portion of the assignment to prophylaxis; *i. e.*, the teacher may at the close caution the student against prevailing errors and endeavour to forestall possible misconceptions. Such cautions, however, should not be thrown out at random; they should be aimed at the besetting sins of the class in hand or at the temptations peculiar to the subject. The faults of individuals should receive individual attention. In any case, this negative feature should be touched with a light and rapid hand. To close the assignment with a lecture on the errors of preceding essays is to destroy to some degree its dynamic effect.

Cautions.

To sum up. The assignment is a talk — generally a brief talk — given by the teacher to the composition class. Its purpose is to throw the student into the proper mood or frame of mind for composing to the best advantage. This it does by providing him with an interesting subject to write about, by making him feel that he is capable of writing about it, by showing to him that other persons want him to write about it, and by giving him some intimation of the best method of attacking it. It may also include cautions against misconception or error. The effect of the whole should be to create a natural situation, real or imaginary, in which the student's powers of expression and communication are stimulated to their normal maximum.

Summary.

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[1] This remark, however, applies more particularly to the lower grades; in more advanced classes there is no reason why a rhetorical principle should not now and then be explicitly stated in the assignment.

CHAPTER VII

ESSAY-CORRECTING

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Theme-Correcting in Ill-Repute.

THE opinion that the correcting of school compositions is a low and disagreeable form of mental labour has been expressed so often and with so much emphasis and by so many eminent authorities that it has now come to be regarded as a part of the condensed wisdom of humanity. Persons who do not profess to know anything else about the teaching of English, know that much, and cannot be shaken in their conviction. The teacher of composition who appears upon the street or the campus with a bundle of essays under his arm is greeted by his friends with pitying smiles and expressions of sympathy. If he ventures to demur, as he sometimes does, and to affirm that he is still an optimist and on the whole rather enjoys this kind of work, the look of pity

slowly changes to one of rapt astonishment, to be succeeded in turn by shouts of laughter. He must be joking. That any one should actually derive pleasure from the correction of school compositions is too much for human credulity.

Is the Evil Intrinsic?

For this general sentiment regarding the disagreeableness of theme-correcting there is doubtless a basis of fact. It must be conceded at once that to particular persons, in particular schools, on particular occasions, the work of correction is unrelieved drudgery. But the question which it is desired to raise in this discussion is not particular, but general. What we wish to inquire is whether or not correcting is, with some happy exceptions, inevitably joyless, — joyless intrinsically and universally. There is at least a possibility that the disagreeableness of which complaint is made is due not to an inherent and inseparable quality of the act, but to some accidental quality, — to some accompaniment or set of unfavourable conditions under which the act has hitherto been performed. We know that this may be the case in other branches of study. Let us take, for example, the case of a teacher of Virgil. Under favourable conditions, the teaching of the poetry of Virgil is regarded by students of Latin as a fairly agreeable task, interesting and enjoyable to teacher and pupil alike. But in particular cases the conditions may not be favourable. Suppose the case of a teacher who is compelled to teach Virgil eight hours a day for six days in the week. Suppose also that he has Virgil conferences which take up the remainder of his working hours and even encroach on his sleep. Who, under these conditions, would not sicken of the *Æneid*? Or take the case of a teacher who, having prepared himself for the teaching of Latin, is called upon to teach something of a wholly different character, — let us say, geometry. Although he knows little about geometry, we may suppose, and cares nothing about its pedagogical aspects, — perhaps seriously misapprehends the end and aim of the science, — he is yet compelled to teach it to his classes four hours a day for five days in the week. Conceive how, longing all the time to be

at his Latin, such a teacher would comport himself toward the teaching of geometry.

Yet it not unfrequently occurs that the correcting of essays is performed under conditions not less unfavourable than those hinted at in the illustrations given above. It is not uncommon for teachers of English in secondary schools who are conducting twenty hours of recitation a week, to sit up until twelve o'clock night after night in order to correct the compositions of their pupils, and to give liberally of their time after school hours to personal conferences. And cases are not unknown where the teacher of composition longs eagerly in his secret heart to teach some other subject — literature, perhaps.[1] Is it any wonder that the task is in such cases uncongenial? If these untoward conditions were removed, is it not conceivable that the correcting of essays might be found intrinsically as attractive as the teaching of Virgil or of geometry? Examining these unfavourable conditions, let us attempt to determine whether or not they can be ameliorated. They are, as implied in the illustrations, as follows: —

Unfavourable Conditions.

(1) The amount of correction is often greater than the teacher should be asked to undertake.

(2) The work of correction is sometimes undertaken by persons who have no special aptitude for it.

(3) The work of correction is sometimes undertaken by persons who have had no special training for it. And as a corollary from this,

(4) The work of correction is sometimes undertaken by persons who misapprehend its purpose and essential characteristics.

The first condition, namely, the excessive amount of correction that teachers of English are asked to undertake, is doubt-

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[1] "I have never done any rhetorical work at —— except in connection with my courses in literature, and I thank God I have been delivered from the bondage of theme-work into the glorious liberty of literature." From a private letter by a teacher in an Eastern University.

less the most unfavourable, and is responsible for most of the complaint. It is also the most difficult to remedy. Three solutions of the problem may be considered. The first is to distribute the essays to be corrected among teachers of other subjects. The teacher of Latin takes a bunch, the teacher of physics another bunch, the teacher of mathematics another, until perhaps a third of the number has been peddled out. The teacher of English takes the rest. This co-operative plan has seemed to some principals an easy method of solving the problem, and is now in practice in a considerable number of schools. The chief objections to the method are, (1) that it throws the important work of correction into the hands of persons who may have had no preparation for it and may have no liking for it; (2) that it divides responsibility for the method and degree of thoroughness of the correction, and by making it anybody's business ultimately makes it nobody's business; and (3) that it prevents or delays the proper recognition of the special teacher of composition.

Co-operative Correction.

These are theoretical considerations. Whether or not the method is pernicious in its practical application must be decided by an inspection of the schools in which it is in force. In several cases where it has been tried under the most favourable circumstances it has resulted in a rapid lowering of the standard of written English.

A second solution was suggested several years ago by Professor William Lyon Phelps, of Yale, in a brief article contributed to the CENTURY MAGAZINE. The nature of the suggestion will appear from the following extract: —

Correctio a non corrigendo.

"A wide reader is usually a correct writer; and he has reached the goal in the most delightful manner, without feeling the penalty of Adam. . . . We would not take the extreme position taken by some, that all practice in theme-writing is time thrown away; but after a costly experience of the drudgery that composition work forces on teacher and pupil, we would say emphatically that there is no educational method at present that involves so enormous an outlay of time, energy, and money,

with so correspondingly small a result. . . . In order to support this with evidence, let us take the experience of a specialist who investigated the question by reading many hundred sophomore compositions in two of our leading colleges, where the natural capacity and previous training of the students were fairly equal. In one college every freshman wrote themes steadily through the year, with an accompaniment of sound instruction in rhetorical principles; in the other college every freshman studied Shakspere, with absolutely no training in rhetoric and with no practice in composition. A comparison of the themes written in their sophomore year by these students showed that technically the two were fully on a par. That is weighty and most significant testimony."[1]

Could the theory of the above citation be established as sound, a delightful simplification of the composition work would at once ensue. Composition classes could be disbanded. Readers of themes would drop their pencils and become readers of Shakspere. The raw student could be left to absorb from his Addison, his Macaulay, and his Stevenson, with scarce an effort, the proficiency in writing which his predecessors had won, so to speak, at the point of the bayonet. Unfortunately, however, the data for settling the question are not yet at hand. It is dangerous to generalize from a single instance, even when the utmost precautions have been taken to insure scientific accuracy. In this case no precautions appear to have been taken. Consequently it is an open question whether the results obtained were not due to wholly different causes from those assumed in the article.[2]

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[1] CENTURY MAGAZINE, LI. 793, 794.

[2] In order to throw some light upon the problem, or at least to obtain opinions as to how light might be thrown upon it, the pedagogical section of the Modern Language Association of America issued in 1901 a circular letter addressed to a large number of teachers of English in this country and abroad, containing the extract cited above. To the extract were appended the following questions: —

1. What is your opinion of the idea expressed in the quotation? 2. Do you know of any similar experiments? If so, please give full details. 3. Do you think it is possible to conduct an experiment or a

The third solution of the problem is to increase the number of teachers. If themes must be read, let the schools furnish the men and women to read them. Double the force; if necessary, triple or quadruple it. If in a high school in which there are four hundred pupils, ten readers are necessary to handle all of the written work, then have ten readers. To this the objection will be raised that the taxpayers will not, and in many cases cannot, afford to pay the additional expense required. But this objection can easily be set aside by an appeal to the history of education. Past experience shows that the general public has never shrunk from lavish expenditure upon the schools as soon as it was convinced of the necessity. Not many years ago, physics and chemistry were taught in our high schools at little greater expense than Latin and Greek. The laboratory method was almost unknown. Now even the smallest high school has its laboratory, equipped with expensive apparatus, while the equipment of the larger high schools for botany, zoölogy, physics, and chemistry fairly puts the universities to shame. It is not unusual for large high schools to spend eight, ten, even twenty thousand dollars in a lump, for means of instruction in science. This being so, surely it is not wholly past belief that if a concerted attempt were made to arouse public opinion upon the subject of English composition, the money could be obtained for doubling or quadrupling the force of teachers.

More Teachers Needed.

Whether this happy state will ever be attained or not, of one thing we may be sure. It is that up to the present time too

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series of experiments which would furnish conclusive proof of the value or the futility of requiring freshmen to write themes steadily through the year?

A few of the most suggestive answers were embodied by Professor W. E. Mead, the Secretary of the Pedagogical Section, in a report published in the SCHOOL REVIEW for May, 1902, under the title "The Undergraduate Study of English Composition." As will appear from the specimens there given, opinion was fairly divided, though the burden of proof, as Professor Mead says, still rests upon the advocates of reading as against theme-writing and theme-correcting.

little credit has been given to the teacher of English for the composition work actually done in the schools, and consequently not enough allowance has been made for the time that must be devoted to this kind of work. If the correction of essays be taken into account, the teacher of English frequently does two or three times as much work as any other teacher in the school. Indeed, this is so well known that it is sometimes a matter of common jest among the teaching force. It should be said for the teachers of English that they take these jests in good part, and assume the extra burden in a spirit of self-sacrifice that is in the highest degree commendable. But this sacrifice should not be asked of them. The burdens of teaching should as soon as possible be adjusted more equitably. It is not unduly magnifying the importance of the English work to say that in any school when the time comes for an enlargement of the teaching force the first question asked should be, not "Do we need another teacher of science, or of history, or of mathematics?" but "Do we not greatly need another teacher of English?" This should come first; other questions later.

Composition Teachers Overworked.

The second unfavourable condition, namely, that the work of correction falls to the lot of persons who have no special aptitude for it, may be dismissed somewhat briefly. Elsewhere in this book, the point has been made that special aptitude for essay-correcting is a *sine qua non* for a successful teacher of composition. Yet, in taking stock of the candidate's qualifications, it is commonly disregarded. The assumption often seems to be that anybody who can read and write the English language with a fair degree of proficiency may be entrusted with the correction of compositions. In one sense this is perhaps true. Everybody, or almost everybody, can correct mistakes in spelling or can caution the pupil against certain well-known errors of speech, though even in this limited field some grotesque misconceptions might be noted; but, as will be argued presently, this is not the essential part of essay-correction. Special aptitude, native talent for

Special Aptitude Necessary.

this kind of work, genuine liking for it in all its phases, is probably as rare as a gift for mathematics, for the classics, or for the biological sciences. Any one, therefore, who purposes to undertake the teaching of English composition ought to ask himself seriously whether he has a special aptitude for correcting essays. Should he decide that in his case such aptitude is lacking, it does not follow that he should forthwith give up all thought of teaching composition, for he may be mistaken in his judgment of himself; but he should understand at the outset that in the struggle for existence he is seriously handicapped, and that he may be displaced, or at least outstripped, at any time by some one who through natural endowment is better fitted to survive. He should also understand that a kind of work which is distasteful to him is not likely to be either very attractive or very profitable to those who are so unfortunate as to be in his classes.

In the third place, it sometimes occurs that the teacher who has a moderate number of essays to correct and also has special aptitude for correcting them, seriously misapprehends the nature of the task. To make this point clear it is necessary to speak at a little length of the purpose of composition and the part that correction plays in it.

The Object of Composition Teaching.

What is the object of composition work in the schools? Most teachers would reply to this question that it is to develop the student's facility in the use of language. In one sense this is true, but the answer may, and frequently does in practice, conceal a serious fallacy. The teacher of composition who does no more than to cultivate in his students a facility of speech has overlooked the main point. His first and most important duty is to develop character, to bring out in the boy or girl the man or woman that is to be, to fit the student for the part that he is to play in life. To this end instruction in English, as in any other subject, is but a means. We may, then, answer the question that stands at the beginning of the paragraph in some such way as this. The object of composition teaching is to fit the student to play his part in the

business of life so far as his use of language is concerned; or, otherwise put, to enable him in any calling, as politics, religion, science, medicine, literature, to use the tool language in the most effective way.

This sounds, perhaps, like quibbling, but it is not. The distinction is important and vital and far-reaching. The doctrine so sharply rebuked by Socrates in the *Gorgias* — the doctrine, namely, that facility of pen and voice comes first in degree of importance, manhood and womanhood second — unfortunately did not perish with the Greek sophists. It still lives and exerts a powerful influence in our courts, our political gatherings, our newspapers, and our legislatures. It is the business of the teacher of composition to kill it at the root. If he does this, his work is so far good, though his students break every rule in English grammar. And if he does not do this, though he teach his pupils to speak with the tongues of men and of angels, his work is so far a failure.

Character versus Facility of Speech.

To fit the student to employ his tongue and his pen in the service of his manhood, the teacher may employ a variety of agencies. First, he may use the potent influence of good literature. Second, he may give the student practice in writing and speaking. Third, he may instruct the student in the principles of rhetoric; that is, he may call his attention to the uniformities of expression observable in the composition of successful writers. Fourth, — and this is the point in which we are now especially interested, — he may take note wherein the student's powers and habits of expression are susceptible of improvement, and by words of encouragement, advice, caution, or censure, as the case requires, may help him to overcome his faults. It is this last procedure to which the term "correction" is applied. Under this head should be brought not only abbreviations, hints, and questions written in the margin of the essay, but also counsel and suggestion given to the student orally.

Meaning of Correction.

Taking correction in this broad sense, we may say that its purpose, like that of composition teaching in general, is the

development of the individual student with respect to his use of language. Its specific aim is the checking of bad habits of expression and communication and the substitution for them of good habits. Inasmuch as all who learn to write commit errors of one kind or another, correction is an indispensable part of the teaching of composition.

Aim of Correction.

Regarding correction from the point of view indicated above, we may next inquire into its proper nature and spirit. From what has just been said, we may infer certain general characteristics, as follows: —

(1) *Correction should be individual.* Study of the individual student, the proper starting-point for all teaching of composition, is peculiarly necessary as a basis for correction. The good teacher of English will try to know his students through and through. Informing himself in every possible way regarding the influences that have shaped their speech thus far and have given it its individuality, he will be interested in learning their present habits of mind, — their ambitions, their doubts, their fancies, their likes and dislikes. By careful inquiry and observation, and perhaps by experiment, he will try to determine each student's failings and the causes of them, so that when occasion arises he can lay his finger upon the point of weakness and say with confidence, "Here and here thou ailest." But he will endeavour also to learn wherein lies the strength of each student, and to this quest he will devote not less attention than to the discovery of his failings.

Study of the Individual Student.

(2) *Correction should be constructive.* This is a corollary from the definition. Correction, like every other part of composition work, should primarily aim at development. It should build up, not tear down. It has, to be sure, a negative side, which must not be left out of the account. Thus, if its immediate object is to check and repress a wrong tendency, it may take the form of rebuke. Sometimes the only way to unseal the eyes of a pupil who is in love with his own faults is by means of irony. But correction should not stop with these negative results. Its ultimate aim

Correction should Develop, not Repress.

should be the development, not the repression, of the student's powers.

To be truly constructive, correction should be stimulating and suggestive. It should stir the pupil's thought, give him something definite to reflect upon, set a problem for him to solve. Paradoxical as it may seem, good correction will promote originality and spontaneity. It will widen the pupil's intellectual horizon and rouse his dormant faculties. It will remind him of knowledge already acquired, pique his curiosity, and stir his ambition to acquire fresh knowledge. There are a hundred ways in which this end can be attained. To take a single illustration, the alert teacher will often make use of apt reference to literature. By this means a commonplace correction can often be reanimated. For example, suppose the word "transpire" to have been wrongly used in the sense of "happen." Correction of the error may be made in two different ways. The unsuggestive way is to put an abbreviation or question-mark in the margin. A suggestive and thought-provoking way is to write there: "See Lowell's Letters, Vol. II. p. 47." The student on turning to the citation reads as follows: —

TO T. B. ALDRICH.

MY DEAR ALDRICH: — It is a capital little book — but I had read it all before, and liked it thoroughly. I think it is wholesome, interesting, and above all natural. The only quarrel I have with you is that I found in it the infamous word "transpired." E-pluribus-unum it! Why not "happened"? You are on the very brink of the pit.

By a reference of this kind not only is the student's attention so fixed upon the error that he is not likely to forget it, but by the very process of correction he is introduced to an entertaining collection of letters which some day he may wish to read. The teacher of composition should have in his mind, or at his elbow in a card catalogue, hundreds of such references, covering all cases of words commonly misused by his students. Is he fond of Shakspere? What task could be more pleasant than to

collect from Shakspere's writings striking examples of such words? Does he wish his pupils to read Tennyson and to commit to memory extracts from his poems? How better accomplish this end than by sending them to the poems to note Tennyson's use of common words? So with the larger elements of discourse. If the pupil's description is weak or in bad taste, direct him to something on the same subject in Hawthorne, in Irving, or in Defoe. Such reading as this comes home to the pupil, sticks in his memory, and gradually forms within his mind a standard for self-criticism.

It should be superfluous to add that all constructive correction is given in a kindly and helpful spirit. This means that the teacher must not only have a general interest in the welfare of the student, but a close sympathy with his aims, his struggles, his failures, and his small successes. It is not by any means necessary, as some teachers seem to think, that this sympathy should be sentimental and gushing. It may, on the contrary, find expression in words that are sharp and caustic, provided only there is about them that indefinable something which assures the student that in his teacher he has a guide, philosopher, and friend.

A Kindly Spirit Necessary.

(3) In the third place, *correction should be rational.* This means that the teacher of composition should have not only sympathy and good taste, but also knowledge. He should be so thoroughly grounded in the underlying principles of rhetoric that whenever need arises he can give a reason, where a reason is possible, for the faith that is within him. In this regard teachers of composition are not as a body so well informed as is desirable. It is doubtful whether any great number of teachers even in the universities have kept track of the advance of rhetorical theory, are prepared, for instance, to say just what additions to the knowledge of rhetorical effects have been made by recent investigations in psychology, ethics, sociology, and æsthetics. For this they are not wholly to blame. Unlike teachers of physics, of modern languages, of biology, and of other studies that could be named,

Correction should be Rational.

teachers of rhetoric have as yet no technical journal in which by the recording of investigation and the exchange of opinion the chaff can be separated from the wheat. Much, however, can be gained from books. Teachers ought at least to push their studies far enough to distinguish between slipshod work like that of Richard Grant White, in certain of his writings, and the editor of the *Verbalist*, and scientific work like that of Paul and Kellner and Jespersen. They should be sufficiently enlightened not to assume before the dictionary the attitude of the savage in the presence of his fetich. The time is coming when every teacher of rhetoric and composition will be expected to know something about the history of rhetorical theory and the present status of unsettled problems. Lacking such knowledge, the teacher in his correction is apt to be arbitrary, inconsistent, and hypercritical.

(4) In the fourth place, *correction should be systematic.* The teacher may advisedly put himself in the attitude of the physician. Having diagnosed the case of a pupil who comes under his charge, he should lay out the course of treatment and forecast the outcome. Such correction as is made should then be made with reference to this end. It is an excellent plan to keep such a brief record of the pupil's case as physicians are wont to keep of their patients, noting therein the results of the correction. If the pupil's rhetorical health does not improve under treatment, a systematic effort should be made to discover and to eradicate the cause of his disease.

Value of System.

Unsystematic correction is not only futile in a majority of cases; it also wastes the teacher's time. Not every fault in every essay needs to be corrected. It is sometimes best to concentrate attention for a time upon one or two essentials. Not infrequently in the case of work which is manifestly crude and defective the most helpful correction which the teacher can give is to write at the end of the composition, "Good! keep at it."

(5) Last, and most important of all, the teacher in his correction *should exercise common sense.* This is the saving grace,

the crowning virtue in every department of instruction; but it is of especial worth in the department of composition. Judiciously exercised, it will save the teacher from the besetting sins of narrowness and dogmatism. It will also absolve him from the solemn reproach of knowing too much about his subject. How any teacher can know too much about his own business is difficult to understand, but it may easily happen that a well-equipped teacher of composition will make a foolish use of his rhetorical learning, just as, if he were ignorant, he would make a foolish use of his ignorance. Says Mr. Balfour, in one of his entertaining addresses: "It is true, no doubt, that many learned people are dull; but there is no indication whatever that they are dull because they are learned. True dulness is seldom acquired; it is a natural grace, the manifestations of which, however modified by education, remain in substance the same. Fill a dull man to the brim with knowledge, and he will not become less dull, as the enthusiasts for education vainly imagine, but neither will he become duller." Speaking in the same spirit, we may say that although many learned teachers of rhetoric have been failures, there is slight evidence to prove that they failed because they were learned. All that was needed was the exercise of a little common sense.

The Grace of Common Sense.

An endeavour has now been made to sketch in broad outlines the purpose and the essential characteristics of good correction. It remains to inquire whether correction with such an aim and of such a nature is inherently and inevitably disagreeable. The opinion will here be stoutly maintained that it is not. On the contrary, pursued in the right way, the correction of essays may be as pleasing and as profitable as any pedagogical procedure that can be mentioned. Why is any kind or part of teaching attractive? Because, primarily, it gives an opportunity to exercise special aptitude and training for the benefit of society; secondly, because it enables the teacher to promote his scholarship, to cultivate his tastes, to build up his character, to broaden and deepen his views of things. Now the correction of essays, commonly

Correction not intrinsically Disagreeable.

deemed so trivial, so burdensome, so wasteful of the mental energies, gives opportunity to him who knows how to seize it, for the attainment of all these ends. Has the teacher a native gift, a special aptitude for correction? Here is his supreme chance in life. Let him not throw it away. And it is no small gift. The power to help others in acquiring a mastery of their native speech is one of the most important and valuable in the whole circle of pedagogical equipment.

Does the teacher desire to cultivate his scholarship? The way is open. If his interest is in literature he may so shape his methods of correction that the ransacking of any given field of poetry or prose will be unescapable. If he desires to pursue the study of psychology, he should know that the psychology of language processes is one of the most fascinating as well as one of the most profitable of modern lines of research in this field. If he is interested, as he ought to be, in the reconstruction now going on of the science of rhetoric, the opportunity is all that could be asked for. The written work of the pupils in the secondary schools constitutes precisely the material needed for investigation in this subject.

Correction a Means to other Studies.

Finally, that correction carried on in the manner and spirit here indicated is a cultivating, liberalizing, and character-building process, need not be argued at length. It is surely not going too far to say that a kind of teaching which brings the instructor into so vital and intimate relations with his pupils, which calls for so great an exercise of sympathy, insight, and moral influence, can compete in these respects with other departments of instruction.

Correction may be a Joy forever.

We may then briefly draw the conclusion that essay-correcting, when there is not too much of it, when one has special aptitude and training for it, when its true purpose and essential character are understood, is not intrinsically disagreeable. It may in a true sense become a joy forever.

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